

Poietic Hermeneutics: *making local paths*

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Chester for the degree of Doctor of Professional Studies in Practical Theology

by

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JUNE 2017



POIETIC HERMENEUTICS: making local paths

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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues for *poietic hermeneutics* as a work of gathering and re-siting which intervenes in the local material-discursive site. This is an interruptive tactic of the local church, seeking the flourishing of *here* through transitory, non-hegemonic acts of re-making. In developing this tactic I draw a critique of a practical theology discourse which, I argue, masks acts of making, with a consequent loss of attentiveness to materiality and a normative commitment to the development of practices internal to the church and the practitioner.

This commitment to developing *poietic hermeneutics* for the local church arises through ministry experiences of participation in local embodied and situated narratives of people's lives which are running counter to wider discourses of *this* place. I turn to the work of the anthropologist Tim Ingold for reading such local embodied narratives as trajectories of interweaving living, and begin to shape a conceptual framework to the research through his tools of '*in-between*' lines, *meshwork* and *correspondence*. Through these I construct a *textility* to the language of making which I draw into critical alignment with a wisdom trajectory set out through the participatory Trinitarian theology of Paul Fiddes. Attentive to creativity, justice and love, under Fiddes' model of wisdom, I note disparities in a local meshwork, and shape a tactical performative work of participation through which both the local site and my faith community are reflexively interrupted through temporary re-makings of *here*.

The thesis demonstrates a methodological validity to the practice through a performative ethnographic structure. The gathering and re-siting work takes place in Cathcart, Glasgow. The Field Text is constructed through visual ethnographic work across four 'everyday sites of praxis' in the local setting. Through thematic analysis on the Field Text I develop a Research Text of particular narratives of local living which weave together, tracing a local texturing, a meshwork. This prepares for the installation **#imaginingcommonties**, a temporary kinetic performative intervention through a local material-discursive space, undertaken as a reflexive activist work within a wisdom trajectory of the local church.

There is an unfolding development of findings in the research. Within this particular working out of the practice locally, the project **#imaginingcommonties** develops as a tactical interruption which speaks into wider Scottish land questions and is becoming a useful device in participating in those debates, exploring and assessing local developments in Glasgow. It is also prompting reflection and exploration of the identity of Cathcart Baptist Church in its situatedness. These immediate developments arising through this particular project point to the value of *poietic hermeneutics* as a valid reflexive wisdom practice for the local church. New projects are planned under the same practice, which will develop further distinct tactical moves towards local flourishing. The significance of the work within the academy lies in the extending of a developing *poiesis* strand in practical theology, which here intends to question both the local church and its site through *poietic hermeneutics*, positioned as a wisdom practice undertaken beyond the ecclesia. Within this particular expression of the practice through Cathcart, the use in practical theology of visual ethnography is extended towards non-ecclesial settings and explored within a performative methodology that is underused within the field.

The thesis argues that this is a valid wisdom practice for the local church.

SUMMARY OF PORTFOLIO

This research makes a response to a ministry context where I lacked an adequate language and framework for the issues present. That context lay with a disparity between particular situated lives and wider discourses of stigmatized places, aligned with feelings of being implicated, as a faith community, in that disparity through our proximity to those situated lives.

The Literature Review set an interim language towards making that response. I constructed a conceptual tool in the phrase *visceral body of Christ*, committing to an embodied, liberative and attentive hermeneutical action of the local church. But the conditioning of that action through stigmatized sites brought a second commitment in developing that conceptual tool, displacing power away from the enacting, interpreting community. The *visceral body of Christ* within the Literature Review, is a declaration of my hermeneutical site. It invokes whole body practices of participation in understanding the local site while addressing the sense of being implicated in existing disparities. My use of the term holds the eucharistic/gathered body of Christ to a normative attentiveness to this *visceral body of Christ*, argued as occurring through lives being lived in stigmatized settings. The Literature Review located reflexive resources within practical theology. But a normative commitment to the ecclesial body raised questions for me in addressing the sense of being implicated, as a faith community, in those disparities. I began work on a critical engagement with ethnographic immersive-expressive hermeneutical practices. The Literature Review develops a theological position on taking these kinds of resources into ecclesial practice.

Within the Publishable Article I developed a pilot project, *Naming Fragments*, to test this kind of hermeneutical action through my context. The Publishable Article was submitted prior to the pilot project completing. But the full project was set out within a paper presented to the 2012 Association of American Geographers (AAG) conference in New York, where I shared on a work of gathering within Glencairn Tower. Lying directly opposite the church where I ministered, this tower had become a synecdoche of the problems associated with Motherwell, after the demolition of Ravenscraig Steelworks. In dialogue with the work of the sociologist Loic Wacquant, I developed a temporary expression of a different 'becoming together' than that depicted in the public discourse around the tower. This grew out of research work undertaken in the months before its demolition. Traces of lives were gathered and valued, thematically analysed into expressions of *colour*, *writing*, and *secret places*. Shortly before the tower was demolished these traces were projected onto the tower.

Lessons that came out of the experience of the pilot project lay in two directions. First, that I needed to gather not simply traces of lives but the living, embodied narratives of people as a critical act towards local flourishing; and second, that I needed to find better ways of recording new becomings occurring through the practice. Outside circumstances also bore significantly into the research at this point. Between the construction of the pilot project & the research proposal, I moved ministry from Motherwell to Glasgow. I retained the commitment to the displaced, embodied, liberative hermeneutic in proximity, but my site was no longer the stigmatized site of Glencairn Tower. I turned to activist ethnographic work on the everyday to rework the condition under which that hermeneutic action was being undertaken, intending to gather disparate intimacies of meaning in the social-material local space, attentive to disjunctions and collaborations of relations in those intimacies.

At a personal level, the reflective piece *Discourse Analysis & Reflection on Three Images* was a key work in clarifying my own commitments and entanglements in the works of gathering that now underpinned the developing methodology to the practice, understanding this research as a *making* and not a *finding*. And in that the research became an 'owned' work of personal research calling for a continuing act of reflexivity throughout on my own making of it, while also calling out a reflexivity of the church through enacting the proposed hermeneutic practice.

In the context of my portfolio, my thesis will argue for a local, embodied, reflexive practice of *poietic hermeneutics* that is appropriate to the originating situation but not conditioned by it, where the language has moved from the *visceral body of Christ* to one of *wisdom*. Under a model of wisdom set out by Paul Fiddes, I can carry the participative, embodied and non-totalising aspects of that earlier conceptual tool that I needed to begin making a response to my context, while also opening the practice to other everyday sites.

The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit.

signed.....

date.....

This thesis is dedicated to my family.

To my daughter Abigail. Early thoughts towards this research were undertaken in the first times away from you, in Cambodia and then Prague, while on sabbatical leave in 2005. I placed your photograph at the end of the sabbatical paper which prepared the way for the thesis, to mark how difficult I found those times away from you.

To my son Jonathan. I was writing research material on the top floor of the library at Strathclyde University when I got the phone call that you were arriving early and I had to get back. Your whole life has been lived with this project alongside, and I have missed time with you.

And to Elinor. There have been many absences over many years, and even when I was there, my head was somewhere else. Thank you for trusting that an end would come and for your love and encouragement in not letting me walk away from it in the toughest periods.

Thank you for the gift of time and space to write what I had to write.



Acknowledgements

I acknowledge with immense gratitude the honesty and the support of many in drawing this work to completion:

- Professor Christopher Baker, my supervisor – Chris, we found a language for this thing! Long journey since the first meetings in the train stations at York and in Manchester Piccadilly – the New York trip to speak theology to urban geographers was a significant moment. Thank you for the breadth of your understanding, the wisdom in your questioning, and your committed support throughout this entangled development.
- Within the DProf. programme team at the University of Chester, Professor Elaine Graham and Dr. Dawn Llewellyn. Elaine, from our first meeting in Manchester you have provided a context where it has been possible to critically and creatively explore the practice of ministry as a work of learning together. Thank you, for the pastoral and joy-filled collegiality of the team that you have formed. Dawn – for the craft of writing a thesis and driving it through to passionate clarity, thank you!
- My DProf. colleagues, particularly Greg, Anna, Margaret and Steve. I have loved being on this road with you. The work we shared and the discussions we had through the Residentials were significant stepping stones in getting to here. I am going to miss our times at Gladstones Library immensely!
- The Ecclesiology and Ethnography network based in Durham University and organised through Pete Ward – many thanks for the opportunities to share on my work and receive feedback.
- Alison McAdams – immense support in many ways across decades, for which we are utterly grateful as a family
- Professor Alan Torrance, St Mary's College, University of St Andrews. Thank you for the way you enabled this work to go forward in the midst of very difficult personal circumstances. I loved our discussions in your overflowing study. I acknowledge the debt that I have in my thinking to your uncle and my distant relative Tom Torrance and the conversations we had around him. I'm sorry he died before we managed to arrange the meeting. His book *Space, Time and Incarnation* remains a theological touchstone for me. My thanks also to the Continental Theology & Philosophy weekly seminar that met in St Mary's College across the 2006-07 semesters.
- The Scottish Baptist College, for giving me the opportunity to explore and teach across ten years, and for the encouragement towards research from Rev. Dr Kenneth Roxburgh and Rev. Dr James Gordon. The Eejits – you know who you are – thanks for the early stage banter, and I nearly got through the thesis without mentioning Deleuze.
- Family who have enabled childcare and facilitated study across the years
- Motherwell Baptist Church – where I learnt what ministry is. Thank you for your nurturing love, care and support across the first years of this project.
- Cathcart Baptist Church - you have enabled this work to grow and develop in ways I could not have envisaged when you called me as your minister in 2011. These first six years feel like a beginning – there is so much for us to plant and sow here. Thank you for the gift of so much openness, encouragement and love; for your generosity and faithfulness.

To the people in Cathcart who shared moments of their life in the research work, openly and thoughtfully, I hope I have cared for and looked after the things shared.

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Figure P.1
Beslan School, 2005. Used with permission
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PROLOGUE

There is a photograph taken within the bullet strewn classroom of a school in Beslan in 2005. The photo is taken by a young teenager who has survived the hostage crisis and massacre in the school in 2004. It shows a wooden school chair in the middle of the floor, amidst the rubble. Outlining the edge of the chair seat are cigarette butts, laid side by side. I refer to this photograph and undertake discourse analysis on my use of it, within my portfolio piece *Discourse Analysis on 3 Images*. It was, and is, a significant image for me in the research work. It was present as the front image from my earliest papers, both in preparing the way for the research work and in the first writings.

The cigarettes, the most ordinary, everyday objects within the social setting in Beslan, have, through their gathering and re-siting here, reworked the discursive narrative around this place, through their very materiality and situatedness. It was a transitory, ephemeral making. As those who had lived closest to the loss walked through the damaged classrooms a temporary practice arose of laying a burnt cigarette on this particular chair, lining the edge to mark this and say something against what had taken place. Very ordinary objects, gathered and placed in a particular way, with a photograph taken of the work by a young girl survivor of the massacre.

This transitory, messy, everyday remaking of the discourse of this room, to include not only the unendurable pain of what took place but also this act of creative remaking in the ordinary remains a guiding image for me towards works of gathering and re-siting. There was a profoundness to this act of material creative reworking together as a tactic against the devastating violence of this place, a change in the discourse of here, which has never left me. The practice of gathering and re-siting as a creative liberative action stems from this astonishing act of creativity together in the face of violence, against the closure of a public narrative that could only speak of the violence. My work does not take place in the same extreme experiences, but I seek to follow the same lines of response in the midst of everyday strategies of violence.

INTRODUCTION

Particular possibilities for acting exist at every moment, and these changing possibilities entail a responsibility to intervene in the world's becoming, to contest and rework what matters and what is excluded from mattering.

(Barad, 2003, p. 827)

This was not my starting point. Now it is.

This quote from Karen Barad defines where I now seek to practise ministry, in the wake of the research undertaken in constructing the thesis. My thesis argument is now structured out of this quote, as an act of simplification. I have come late to her work, in relation to my own research. So the structuring in relation to this quote is not a critical assessment of the thinking of Barad. My use of this quote is more of a recognition that we are walking in similar ground. As I walk alongside her for a moment, her words enable me to define my argument for *poietic hermeneutics* as a particular form of intervention. This takes place through my situatedness in the creative relations of a Trinitarian God, as those interweave in the materiality of here. I have come to the responsibility of such intervention differently from the route taken by Barad. It is rooted in experiences of ministry in Motherwell, North Lanarkshire. But that responsibility of intervention is not restricted to nor defined by the early experiences that drove it. By setting my thesis argument in relation to this quote from Barad rather than the originating experience, I am clarifying the use of *poietic*

hermeneutics as a tool to be used in situations different from the particularity of its precarious beginnings in Motherwell.

Here I will link the context of the quote with my pilot project as a setting of my thesis argument. I will return to her words at the end of the thesis. Between these two points the thesis undertakes such a work of intervention, but through the particularities of my own situatedness.

Across 2011/12 I carried out a pilot project, *Naming Fragments*. This is referenced through the thesis. The project entailed working with the materiality of Glencairn Tower, its concreteness, its mass, and the material traces left from those who had lived within the tower, prior to its impending demolition. *Naming Fragments* reconfigured, in a transitory work, the narratives around the people of the tower, the local discursive determinations of what mattered and what didn't matter here. This was my path towards the similar ground that Barad walks on: the intra-relation of local material phenomena and discursive social narratives and practices which express, determine and shape what matters. Within this dynamic local reworking, Barad's valuing of the material against the 'absolute power of language' (Barad, 2003, p. 802) draws a commitment to performative practices of intervention, challenging representational models of seeking change, where the material is simply a passive surface, waiting to be inscribed and written upon, debated.

The pilot project, in its material re-performing and re-iterations of the materiality of the tower and the lives of people there, began to form a practice for me of gathering and re-siting as an action of intervention in this material-discursive local re-making. Within the essay, Barad develops the term ‘apparatus’ for this type of intervening in situated material-discursive practices. *Naming Fragments* was a first exploration of such an apparatus towards intervention in a particular context. There were problems with the pilot project. How does the research work take place alongside people rather than with the traces of their lives? How do I better record the intervention? How does this work take place as the apparatus of a local witnessing community – how can it be a fruitful work of the local church?

This latter question opens the first problematic of the thesis: how do we, as a particular, situated, witnessing community, intervene in such local material-discursive becoming, contesting what matters and what is excluded from mattering, here? My response is the development of *poietic hermeneutics* as a particular *apparatus* for such intervention, one that is both methodologically and theologically valid for the local church. But my first sketching of such an approach draws out a second problematic. This lies within my discipline of practical theology.

This second problematic is the elision of *poiesis* in a practical theology discourse. I argue that this has a normative aspect to it and that it brings two difficulties to the intervention being sought in response to the first problematic: (1) a loss of engagement with the material of our situatedness – it disappears towards text, with a hylomorphic passivity; and (2) the end, *telos*, of developing practices works *in* towards the practitioner and the faith

community, over the blossoming of the local. I argue that *poietic hermeneutics* addresses both of these, extending and developing work begun on poetics in practical theology through Heather Walton.

The answering of the first problematic is an opening out of possibilities and lines of exploration and development towards local blossoming, through re-workings of what matters *here*; the answering of the second problematic is a resolving of an issue within practical theology, and extends developing lines of poetics. Both of these ‘answerings’ are achieved in the work of the thesis. *Poietic hermeneutics* is an *apparatus* for intervening, in non-hegemonic ways, in the becoming of local material-discursive sites within which we are entangled, under a condition of textility. The thesis argues for that apparatus through its performance.

Structure

Within **Part 1**, *Committing to Poietic Hermeneutics*, I pinpoint the need for the *apparatus*, opening up the first problematic through an originating experience in local ministry in Motherwell. I then sketch a response of a transformative open hermeneutic, engaging with that local material-discursive problematic, through taking up three conceptual tools of the social anthropologist Tim Ingold. These tools act as a cipher for working creatively with relational ontologies shaped through Gilles Deleuze, developing a participatory attentiveness to what is taking place around us. This attentiveness is not neutral but directed towards the movements and relations in the material and discursive practices of localities through which

life is taking place. Attending to these provides resources for a local creative, transformative, open hermeneutical practice, *an apparatus for intervention*. I name this as *poietic hermeneutics*.

This, however, draws my work into a developing disagreement in a practical theology discourse around the role of poetics, which I depict as the disappearing work of making. I identify a tension within practical theology around the meaning of poetics. I sketch a second response to the originating experience that begins to address this tension and prepares a way for an ecclesial local attentiveness to the *textility* of here, and how we may create new paths alongside others. This ecclesial participation in works of *poiesis*, of re-makings here, however, brings questions of the enacting of power. Within the concluding piece of Part 1, I commit to a form of reflexivity which constructs critical space in creative work, disrupting and questioning the enactment of a hegemonic narrative.

Within **Part 2, *Gathering***, I construct a valid methodology in shaping an interruptive *apparatus*. Here I argue for a form of performative ethnography, within a wisdom trajectory as a structuring device for the church, taking place under a condition of textility. I undertake a work of gathering, making a Field Text through four everyday sites of praxis and develop this through to a Research Text, a local meshwork, as preparation for a work of re-siting. This development to Research Text is structured through performative criteria of validation. The first criterion, *data sufficiency*, is shown through the crafting from the Field Text to first scriptings, textile ‘correspondences’ which are interim works towards the Research text and the performative kinetic installation. These textile correspondences are expressed in

narrative form, validated under performative criteria of data sufficiency and critical analysis. This meshwork scripting of a local textility, formed through a theoretical framework of Trinitarian participatory acts of wise attentiveness, grounds the Research Text preparing for a kinetic work of re-siting - an interruptive tactic back into the local material-discursive site as a temporary work of re-making.

Part 3, *Crafting Interruptions*, depicts the making of an interruption in the local site through this *apparatus*. I describe and analyse that work of re-siting, titled ‘#imaginingcommonties’, as a crafting of an interruption. This is undertaken as a practice of entangled reflexivity within a wisdom trajectory for the local church. The re-siting shapes a work of critical distancing through which we ourselves are interrupted in who we are as a witnessing community here, exploring theologically valid and non-hegemonic intervention in local material-discursive practices.

Part 4, *Theological Parkour*, locates effects of the interruptions of the apparatus into local material/discursive sites, the practices of the local church and the discourse of practical theology in the academy. I draw the work to a close, setting out how the thesis addresses ‘three publics’, completing the validation of the methodological framework of the thesis. The first problematic - *how do we, as a particular, situated, witnessing community, intervene in local material-discursive becoming, contesting what matters and what is excluded from mattering, here?* – is answered in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 through clarifying lines of development arising out of the project in both public contexts and within my local situating witnessing community. Section 4.3 marks an answering of the second problematic – *the elision of poiesis*

within a practical theology discourse – arguing for the thesis as a tactical work of re-making through a local textility, undertaken as crafted non-hegemonic interruptions, a practice of creative transformative poiesis.

1. COMMITTING TO POIETIC HERMENEUTICS

Chapter 1 pinpoints the need for the apparatus arising out of experiences in ministry. In sketching a first outline for the apparatus I identify a tension within practical theology around the meaning of *poiesis*. I commit to a *poietics*¹ under a condition of textility to produce the apparatus, and set out, under practices of entangled reflexivity, a determination of the apparatus as a non-hegemonic action of creative interruption in the local material-discursive site.

¹ Through the thesis, in preference to the term *poetics*, I will use the term *poietics* when referencing my intentions in developing practices within an understanding of *textility* in making – see 1.1, following.



Figure 1.1

From gathering work, *Naming Fragments* pilot project,
Glencairn Tower, Motherwell 2011. Photo © derrick I watson 2011.

1.1

Of Heroin Heights and the drawing of a garden cottage on the wall of a migrant child's bedroom

OR The problem of being close to a disjunction between public settled narratives and local particular lives

Glencairn Tower, Motherwell, overwhelmed me. Its size, its closeness, its materiality, its concreteness, its separation, its divisiveness, those who lived amongst its barrenness and its views across the Clyde valley and the intensities of the lives of the people flowing through it were overwhelming as I ministered in and around the tower. This irruption into my life did not prompt thoughts of improving my ministry practice or setting goals around congregational development. I may not have used these words but the *telos*, the end, lay beyond me and beyond the congregation through which I ministered towards a new weaving, a new making of this material-social knot of living, in which both I and the people of the church were entangled and implicated, in some way.

The opening problematic of the thesis is born out of a disparity between people's living narratives from within this tower, some of whom I knew, and the common, agreed and closed narrative told in the public discourse. Maybe because much of my connection with those in the tower lay through our children's work there were narratives of life and colour and laughter and family that contrasted with a public discourse of abandonment, of closing up and burning down. That disparity combined with my own feelings of being implicated in some way, of the church being implicated in some way, in that disparity through our nearness – this is where it starts.

1.1.1

Sketching a response – 1

‘Practitioners, I contend, are wanderers, wayfarers, whose skill lies in their ability to find the grain of the world’s becoming and to follow its course while bending it to their evolving purpose’

(Ingold, 2010, p. 92)

In his exploration of land ownership and social transformation Andro Linklater describes his own home, a 15thC farmhouse, as expressing in its chimney, its roof and an internal wooden beam, a radical shift in social relations. He quotes the writings of a local minister, the Reverend William Harrison, who gathered the memories of those living in a village close to the farmhouse in the 1570s, that amongst the old men they thought it ‘marvellously altered in England within their sound remembrance...the multitude of chimneys lately erected’ (Linklater, 2015, p. 9). These three material elements, the chimney, roof and beam, constructed a social life of separation from the common space of the earlier home. The chimney took smoke from a separate cooking area, away from where you dined, the long roof coming down over the back of the chimney held the heat of the new arrangement, the large beam carrying the upper floor held a separate bedchamber. These changes in the everyday material fabric of living constructed and expressed radically changing social relations and practices of living that Linklater argues is tied to a wider social transformation around land ownership. This interaction of local material and social relations taking place as constructions

of wider social change points towards a possible path of responding to this first problematic. What kind of tools are needed to attend to those local material-social changes as they are underway, not as an assessment of historical development? How do we engage in those changes when they are still being made, when there are disparate stories around what is taking place? How do we assess our own involvement in what is underway, in public and particular narratives of what lies near?

The 'present-ness' of that 'here/now' against a historical assessment requires tools that will provide a hermeneutical openness to what is immediately taking place in the local material-social meshwork of living. Tim Ingold sets out two possible responses to a drawn circle that clarify early decisions in hermeneutical commitments that I am taking in the constructing of the thesis. When we draw a rough circle on a piece of paper, we can interpret it as the trace of a movement of the hand across the paper, we can explore the movement and the materiality of the action through which this tracing is taking place; or we can look at the finished circle and set out our interpretation on the basis of the object completed (Ingold, 2009, p. 147). These diverging paths of interpretation don't require the denial of the interpretive force of the other but their implementation in living situations has significant implications for the transformative practices that may arise. Since 2006 Glasgow has been undergoing a radical shift in its housing stock away from high rise tower blocks constructed in the 1960s and 1970s. The changes to the skyline are being documented by the visual artist and documentarist Chris Leslie. His long term *Glasgow Renaissance* project, which is visually recording and analysing the demolitions and their impact on the people and the communities affected by these changes, consciously sets this work of life and movement against the

wholesale destruction of those communities through the removal of the towers and the redistribution of people (Leslie, 2016 *Disappearing Glasgow*)². Leslie suggests through the project that the latter move is likely to be re-iterated again and again unless we learn to transform and change differently. In Ingold's terms Leslie is arguing in transformative practice for a hermeneutic of the drawing of the circle against Glasgow Council's hermeneutic of the objectified circle. The choice of hermeneutical strategies currently underway in Glasgow is not a neutral academic choice but one which deeply affects the lives and the communities of people involved.

Taking on this open hermeneutic stance of Ingold - what I will term a *poietic hermeneutic* – leads to a first tentative sketching in making an answering to the first problematic. Each step that follows is a subsequent expansion of this first answering to that problematic. The disjunction experienced sources a desire to gather local living stories that may interrupt public narratives. This thesis is a story of that gathering, of that interruptive action and of our entanglement in the doing of this local tactic as an argument for what to do with that disparity and the feelings of being implicated/involved, that this *is*. The response is not a new 'completed-ness' of a story, it is a continuing work of keeping open the life-lines through a site, against a hermeneutic of completion.

But why choose this *poietic hermeneutic*? What is at stake in making a commitment to interpret 'the now' through the movements, materialities and relations through which 'the

² Retrieved 20th September 2016 from <http://www.disappearing-glasgow.com/portfolio/introduction/>

now' is taking place in preference to interpreting 'completed things'? And does it need to be a choice? For Ingold there is an ontological decision being made here in how we are articulating our aliveness in the world. The starting premise in making this hermeneutical choice, for Ingold, lies in understanding that 'every living being is a line, or better, a bundle of lines' (Ingold, 2015, loc.220). Ingold shapes three conceptual tools which help to structure this hermeneutical way of being in the world that is creatively present towards living: *in-between*; *meshwork*; and *corresponding*. The decision to take this stance does not negate the possibilities of interpreting interactions between subject/objects, between 'articulated blobs', in the wonderful language that Ingold uses to express his argument. But if we want to participate in the life that is taking place, to what is 'becoming' in this moment, then we make commitments to the lines through which life is taking place – we commit to an attentiveness to the becomings of here/now, being creatively present to aliveness.

Ingold tells a story which encapsulates these distinctions. He pictures himself at one side of a river, with a ferryman at the other side. There is communication between the two subjects, shouting across the river. The communication between the passenger and the ferryman brings action. The ferryman will make the crossing and collect to bring across the river. But the 'taking place' occurs through participating in the currents of the river, judging, moving, a verbal doing of movements in the material and social event of the river crossing which is life taking place. The conceptual tools of *in-between*, *meshwork* and *corresponding* help to bring an attentiveness to such interlacing and weaving of movements through which life is taking place and becoming. Even in the apparent calling from subject to subject across the water prior to the crossing, the lines and relations through which that communication

takes place are material and social lines of movement which the ferryman and the passenger participate in - the histories of the language forming words which both participate in, the way the air is produced within their bodies, in and out to carry the words across the water. To picture the prior conversation as a subject to subject, 'blob to blob', transfer is simply to mask all the material-social lines through which the conversation is taking place. It is that argument for masking which allows Ingold to pursue a commitment to this hermeneutic of making – the stance expressed through the image of the drawing of the circle - as a critique of interpretations which only take account of the completed circle. They are not equivalents, one interpretive strategy masks the other. I choose to commit to an interpretive stance that is attentive to the becomings of what is complete around us, as a critical route towards interrupting that 'completed-ness'. Sarah Pink speaks of interruption as 'an act of unsettling the certainty' (Pink, 2012a, p. 232) . The attentive gatherings of particular narratives through which life is taking place may operate as interruptive expressions against the 'completeness' of what is here.

1.1.2

Drawing Tools

That attentiveness is structured conceptually within the research around the three tools of Ingold: *in-between lines*; *meshwork*; and *correspondence*. As these are taken into the methodological framework they give orientation to the journey through the research. Within that methodology the underlying ontology of Ingold is brought into critical alignment with a

Trinitarian participatory wisdom trajectory in shaping my theoretical framework, through which the research is critically analysed. This will be undertaken within 2.3.2. Here I set out the conceptual tools from Ingold, in developing a work of gathering and re-siting in local settings, as a prospective interruptive act.

in-between

I am a middle child. I have an older brother and a younger sister. There is a sense in which my life has been lived *in-between*. Not ‘between’ the oldest and the youngest but *in-between*. The distinction is significant within Ingold’s conceptual apparatus. ‘Between’ belongs to a language of points and lines linking them. There is no life between the oldest and the youngest where they are seen as end points with a line that goes between them. But I have grown a life *in-between* my older brother and younger sister. A life is being lived along a line that moves and entangles and interlaces with their lines of living but does not stretch between them. This distinction of the deadness of a line ‘between’ and the aliveness of a line *in-between* is critical to the argument of Ingold (Ingold, 2015, loc. 3099). There is a call here to attentiveness to the movements through which present articulations (subjects/objects) are occurring, attentiveness to the life that takes place *in-between*.

meshwork

‘Things are their relations’ (Ingold, 2011a, p. 70). This is a bold statement. This is not to say that to objectify ‘things’ or name ourselves as ‘subjects’ has no meaning or value. But to return to the earlier picture of the river and the ferryman, as an image of living the crossing

takes place through a 'mid-streaming' – movements which interlace and weave with currents and material-social lines of the river, where there is a continual attentiveness to those lines, those relations of movement in order to make the crossing – to name this as 'the crossing' folds the life - the lines, the relations through which this takes place - back in on itself, and masks attempts towards an attentiveness to the doing of this moment, to participating in these lines of living. Life takes place in that crossing through an attentive participation, entangling for a time in these other lines. The *meshwork*, for Ingold, is this mesh of lines through which we are already entangled and forming. Rather than a language of environment, that which lies around us and which we can occupy, we inhabit a domain of entanglement, our world is textured, woven, through the lines, knotting into things (Ingold, 2011a, p. 71). Here there is a call to attentiveness towards the particular textures, entanglements and knots of the lines through which life is becoming – the *textility* of the local.

correspondence

The third tool speaks to an active verbal doing in the meshwork – *an answering*. As I write this, in the room along from me in the church, I can hear two friends playing Scottish laments on the fiddle and mouth organ – the sound moves along together made in the “listening as they play and playing as they listen, at every moment sharing in the other’s ‘vivid present’” (Ingold, 2013, p. 106). This active answering as a practice of attentiveness to one another, in the *meshwork* and the *in-between* lines of becoming, is the third tool, for Ingold – *correspondence*. Ingold uses this term to work against a language of 'interaction' in research, which he argues, underpins descriptive patterns of engagement rather than approaches of creative makings:

To correspond with the world, in short, is not to describe it, or to represent it, but to answer to it...(this) is the essence of making.

(Ingold, 2013, p. 108)

He uses a series of images to convey a sense of this – walking alongside another, rather than stopping and turning face to face; the bending to the wind in sailing; the music played as a group. What is common to these images is an attentiveness and responsiveness to the life around us, where there are answering movements to one another in the midst of local happenings. *Correspondence* refers to this verbal doing of participating rather than representing, answering and being answered in this moment

It has nothing to do with representation or description. It is rather about answering to these happenings with interventions, questions and responses of our own—or in other words, about living *attentionally* with others....humans are *humaning*. That is to say, they are corresponding - as letter writers do, scribing their thoughts and feelings and waiting for answers - living lives that weave around one another along ever-extending ways.

(Ingold, 2014, p. 389)

This tool draws our own lines of *becoming* actively into the meshwork, not to describe, but to live in the midst of things, answering and being answered in local situated re-makings of the ‘possibilities and potentials’ (Ingold, 2015, loc.3326) of life here.

These three conceptual tools in Ingold’s work provide ways of approaching attentiveness within local material-social sites under what I am suggesting is a *poietic*

hermeneutic. This opening response to the original problematic, a first sketching out of a creative, entangled reflexive participation in local lines of becoming, under a *poietic hermeneutic*, however, raises a second problematic, within my own discipline of practical theology.



Figure 1.2

From gathering work, *Naming Fragments* pilot project,
Glencairn Tower, Motherwell 2011. Photo © derrick I watson 2011.

1.2.

The disappearing work of making

OR The problem in practical theology with poiesis

Throughout my research I have had this sense of not quite being connected to the practical theology discourse which had become a vehicle towards understanding and shaping a response to the first problematic. That unease has become a second problematic in the literature for me. The disconnect lies with the elision of 'poiesis' into praxis as an unstated normative within practical theology. My work develops a practical theology which opens towards *poiesis* as a way of becoming skilled practitioners in material local ways, improvising towards wisdom.

1.2.1

The elision of poiesis into praxis

The move is made explicitly in the work of Thomas Groome. I will set this out as a way of structurally opening up how the elision takes place. I argue that this move is implicitly present in much of the current work in practical theology, whether it references Groome or not – it has become a normative in recent definitions and summaries of practical theology as a discipline. I will show this elision within two recent depictions of fieldwork in practical theology which would seem to offer resources for my research but which carry this problematic. I will then critique the loss through the work of Tim Ingold and raise connections in my unease with similar reflections in an essay by Heather Walton.

Thomas Groome and the disappearance of the material

In *Sharing Faith*, Groome argues for 'praxis' as the primary language towards living wisely in the world. 'Praxis' is one of 'three lives' set out by Aristotle and taken up by Groome to argue for particular practices in learning how to live wisely. The first 'living' is *theoria* – the abstracting of universal ideas from the particulars of the world and the development of first principles. The second 'living' is *praxis*, which is constituted in reflecting on activities being undertaken in order to carry them out more wisely. The third 'living' is *poiesis*. This is a knowing which arises in the making of things, developed through art, skill or craft. Aristotle sets these 'ways of living' out hierarchically, where *theoria* is the highest and *poiesis* is the lowest, both in the value of the knowledge towards wisdom and in the social status of those who know in these ways. Groome argues against these hierarchies of knowing. He draws value from each of the three ways of living as he 'co-constitutes' them into a foundation for knowing which will structure his learning process towards wisdom. But that 'co-constituting' becomes explicitly a subsuming of both *theoria* and *poiesis* within praxis-led knowing:

Because I argue that pedagogy for conation in Christian faith must engage and promote critical reflection, ethical action, and imaginative creativity...[I] attempt to reconstruct Aristotle's notion of *praxis* to subsume *theoria* and *poiesis* as foundation of a conative pedagogy...

(Groome, 1998, p. 43)

This quote from Groome highlights not only the elision of *poiesis* but also the reason why the move can be made. *Poiesis* has become depicted by the term 'imaginative creativity' where

the materiality of the making is being forgotten. I will return to this in the later critique through the work of Tim Ingold but Groome's work already depicts this subsuming of *poiesis* into a praxis-led model taking place through a disappearing materiality from the action of knowing through *poiesis*. It is a mimetic knowing. I will argue later that this disappearance of materiality in *poiesis* as it slides into praxis-led research is problematic in engagement with local material sites and that my thesis argues for a re-materialising of praxis-led practical theology through a re-invigorated local *poiesis*.

This loss of materiality in *poiesis* has a further consequence within practical theology discourse. Ray S. Anderson draws a distinction between *praxis* and *poiesis* on the basis of where their *telos* (end/aim) is located, either within the action itself (*praxis*) or outside the action (*poiesis*) (Anderson, 2001, p. 49). The significance for Anderson here lies in the truth of God being disclosed in our own actions – the *telos* of our healing and being made whole takes place through undertaking wise actions marked by the *praxis* of God, distinct from the fabrication of a 'made product', for instance 'the sermon text' under an action of *poiesis*. Anderson's definition of the working of *poiesis* again elides the materiality of *poiesis*. He describes his understanding of *poiesis*: '...the action of poiesis begins with a theoretical design and through the action produces a product.' (Anderson, 2001, p. 49). This depiction will come under critique, but at this point note the absence of any materiality to the action of making. It is a mimetic imagining which becomes a product through an action but there is no indication that there is a learning and working of certain and particular materialities in the making. This matters because it is the finding of the grain in particular 'to hand' materialities and making in the midst of those particularities that gives an interruption to what might be termed simply

‘my/our actions’ in praxis-led work. There is something other than us in the grain of the world that is to be felt and known, crafted in the contours and practices of making that is not being recognised in this disappearance of the material in praxis-led practical theology.

Much subsequent practical theology has colluded in this elision of *poiesis*, even if little mention of it after Groome and Anderson. If, as Elaine Graham notes in assessing practical theology and action research, we follow Marx’s dictum that the point is not simply to interpret the world but to change it (Elaine Graham, 2013, p. 149), then there is a materiality to that change and this elision is limiting the potential of practical theology as a discipline to engage in that material changing in local, particular re-makings.

1.2.2

The elision as normative in practical theology

I will take a recent paper which seeks to delineate a practical theology discourse and set out why it is insufficient in developing practices of (re-)making new material-social sites in the pursuit of local wisdom³. I will follow this with case studies of a recent model of fieldwork in practical theology which carries the same loss and shows the limitations in practice.

³ The way the elision takes place within this paper is symptomatic of the issue within the wider discourse. The recent *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology* (Miller-McLemore, 2011) carries similar issues through opening definitions where Miller-McLemore describes the undertaking of practical theology in its most concrete embodied expressions as ‘an activity seeking to sustain a life of reflective faith in the everyday’ (Miller-McLemore, 2011, p. 5).

a summary definition

In 2012 the land artist Andy Goldsworthy tweeted a picture of icicles put together into a star with the words 'Pretty cool huh? I joined the icicles with my spit :/'⁴

This may seem to have little to do with practical theology. And yet there is a 'changing of the world' in a material way in that action – the tactile attentiveness to local materiality, to 'what is to hand' (or mouth) is *poietic* action that is more than the dematerialised 'imagination to product' which has been elided in much of practical theology. Goldsworthy is collaborating with the materiality of the world around him, and at times with his own body, in a re-weaving of the landscape in which he is himself entangled in that moment.

R. Ruud Ganzevoort, Professor of Practical Theology at VU University, Amsterdam, and president of the International Association of Practical Theology, 2007-2009, in his presidential address to the IAPT (R. Ruud Ganzevoort, 2009) sought to lay out common ground for practical theologians bringing the discipline a suggested coherence around a phrase 'hermeneutics of lived religion'. In a recent article published with Johan Roeland he has given further detail on the delimiting of the field of study for practical theology (R. Ruud Ganzevoort & Roeland, 2014). Similar to my use of the land artist Andy Goldsworthy in his participation in the natural world, Ganzevoort & Roeland work with the experience of a gardener to explore an answer to the question – '...what is the object of study of practical

⁴ Retrieved 20th September 2016 from <https://twitter.com/GoldsworthyAndy/status/185440752858439680>

theology?’ Their response to that question through the example of the gardener clarifies where work is needed in reinvigorating *poiesis* into the field of practical theology.

The opening description of the activity of the gardener does not turn to the materiality of the garden and the making of change. Through its language it depicts internal existential changes *in the gardener* occasioned by the work in the garden and it is these which draw the attention of Ganzevoort & Roeland.

‘...gardening became a “spiritual” activity for Maria.’

‘...through gardening I learn to accept and appreciate the cycles. Appreciating them brings acceptance, satisfaction and peace.’

‘It is an existential and spiritual activity.’

This movement from the materiality and relations of the garden inwards to developments in the gardener through the gardening praxis is a marker of where primary change is to be shaped within praxis-led practical theology as set out by Ganzevoort and Roeland. The looking is inwards. This does not mean that the areas of research, the praxes available for research are limited to the internal – their listing of meaningful activities that are being researched stretches across a very broad range - but the *telos* of the study lies within the improvement in practices and the person of those undertaking the activities. This stems from the commitment to praxis.

Ganzevoort & Roeland commit practical theology to praxis, explicitly distinct from *poietic* action because they understand *poiesis* as simply an instrumental work (R. Ruard Ganzevoort & Roeland, 2014, p. 93) – a doing that aims towards the production of an object. This is an atomised account of *poiesis* that again dematerialises what takes place in making. I will return to this below. But the commitment to praxis with an internalised telos, means that under this model the *telos*, as an outcome of practical *theology*, is required to be set out under ‘religious’ or ‘spiritual’ categories:

When we determine praxis as the object of study in practical theology, we refer to the everyday religious practices of many people: what people do in religious respect.

(R. Ruard Ganzevoort & Roeland, 2014, p. 94)

But in the subsequent section, which discusses three methodologies for studying praxis, there is an unremarked tension between praxis-led research with an internalised telos (the differentiating aspect of praxis from *poiesis*) and the third methodology, ‘practical theology as public and/or contextual theology’ (R. Ruard Ganzevoort & Roeland, 2014, p. 99). They note that ‘(p)raxis here is the liberating effort to change society.’ The aim is change outwith the practitioner, beyond the virtues and skills of the practitioner or the faith community, it is action that intends change socially and materially. That places this methodology in tension with the earlier definition of praxis, which is ‘acting or doing where the aims are internal to the actions itself’ where research on that acting or doing within the praxis of ‘lived religion’ leads to living more faithfully, or better, as practitioner or community. The third methodology carries, in some way, a *telos* that lies beyond that inward development and reaches towards a form of making change in particular material and social sites that lies

beyond agreed, delimited fields of (lived) religious research. The tension provoked between the praxis-led model of practical theology depicted in the paper and the aims of the third methodology give space for an emerging of poiesis as a working element of practical theology. But the possibilities are not recognised here leading to a concluding reading of the praxis of gardening as ‘...providing meaningful access into the hidden or implicit spiritual lives of people today’ (R. Ruard Ganzevoort & Roeland, 2014, p. 100) rather than the prospect of opening up reflections on an activist re-making of the land which materially works changes upon the world through attentiveness to the shaping of what is to hand.

One of the primary voices in this third methodology of public theology, Elaine Graham, opens the door towards such an emergence of *poiesis*. Within a paper exploring connections between practical theology and action research models of research she retains an ultimate commitment towards the cultivation of character as a primary mode and agent of change through research (Elaine Graham, 2013, p. 176). But in her commitments to *attentiveness* to the ‘living presence’ of the creation; the action of research towards the flourishing of the human and ‘more-than-human’ world; and the work of research in responding to a wound (following Fulkerson) (Elaine Graham, 2013, pp. 150, 168, 172) there are traces of a form of *poietic* action that intends to make material change towards flourishing not through imposition but through attending to the materials to hand wisely. Graham conditions Marx’s dictum about changing the world with the intertwining of reflection. To work *poietically* with that conditioning will draw a particular ‘entangled reflexivity’ which will be set out in 1.4. At this point I simply note that her work helps to position the possibility of an emerging work of *poietics* in practical theology within the methodologies around public and contextual

theologies but that the elision of it into praxis remains a normative position in practical theology.

A Case Study on the strength of the elision

A recent publication within this methodology of contextual theology demonstrates the strength of the elision to mask the potential of *poietic* moves in practical theology.

Christian Scharen & the craft of fieldwork in attending to the social

There is a great deal of promise for the *poietic* within the commitment of Christian Scharen towards undertaking fieldwork in practical theology marked by the methodologies of Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant. Scharen is the Vice-President of Applied Research at Auburn Seminary in New York, researching across both ethnographic practice in theology and theological education. His book *Fieldwork in Theology: Exploring the Social Context of God's Work in the World* (C. Scharen, 2015) is being recognised as a significant contribution to the ongoing interactions between ethnographic practice and theology⁵.

Through key resources in the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant, he builds an argument towards understanding 'the complexity of this beautiful and broken world...[through] a careful, disciplined craft for inquiry – a craft I call fieldwork in theology' (C.

⁵ Note endorsements through the Ecclesiology and Ethnography network at <http://www.ecclesiologyandethnography.com/scharen-publishes-important-new-book/>. Retrieved 20th September 2016.

Scharen, 2015, loc.218). In defining the 'theology' aspect of that craft he sets out two broad strategies which have been taken up in the wake of a church living through the loss of power and status. The first of these, following Hauerwas, is depicted as withdrawal from the world and setting up commitments to ecclesial and discipleship formation. But Scharen sets this approach aside – 'It does not easily lend itself to a humble, grounded, curious approach toward understanding the other. There is no place, no need...for the craft of fieldwork in theology' (C. Scharen, 2015, loc.252). Instead he turns to the kenotic language of Donald McKinnon calling for us to live 'an exposed life' which Scharen develops through Rowan Williams towards locating a missional practice of 'dispossession as a crucial theological feature of the craft of fieldwork in theology' (C. Scharen, 2015, loc.319). The fieldwork of Bourdieu, and particularly Wacquant are directed towards 'getting close to social life as lived' (C. Scharen, 2015, loc.1122) but with an intention towards intervention - 'agitating for social change' (C. Scharen, 2015, loc.1511) where the fieldwork can act as 'solvent' through making a critique of the relations which 'weave the fabric of dominant discourses' or as a 'beacon casting light on...social transformations...that may be unnoticed'. The practice of dispossession operating through such fieldwork as an embodied theology, for Scharen, becomes an '... improvisation...formed through participation in the Eucharist [which is transposable to] everyday settings' (C. Scharen, 2015, loc.1563).

Fieldwork as a making, a craft, an improvisation, exposed living, agitating for social change – a humble, grounded, curious craft towards critical noticing of the complexity of this beautiful and broken world. Scharen brings possibilities of a reflexive *poietic* knowing towards practical theology. But the normative position on praxis-led research obscures the move.

Scharen works with fieldwork in the relation of *habitus* to *field* in Bourdieu, where field is the 'concrete social context of our life' (C. Scharen, 2015, loc.348) and habitus is that which is shaped in us through that field. Within his analysis of Bourdieu and Wacquant, Scharen sets out their fieldwork as methods of researching habitus in order to prompt change in the wider social field – the *telos* lies within that wider field. Fieldwork is towards that field through which particular modes of living occur. If we take the title 'Fieldwork in Theology' – his resources towards fieldwork methodologies and practices point towards an engagement in the world; and his resources towards the theology, that of Williams' 'dispossession' and the move away from Hauerwas' church/disciple formation as the *telos*, then the fieldwork should be directed into the world as an exposed improvising agitation, a curious attentiveness to the world in its beauty and brokenness - a making that gets close to social life as lived and critiques the weave of dominant discourses. The fieldwork that is set out in the examples however limits the field to the church, to congregational studies. The fieldwork is towards a habitus of faith within a faith context.

Scharen draws six worked examples of research into his argument for ethnographic fieldwork. In every one of the worked examples the fieldwork takes place within a congregational or faith group setting. His own research journey begins within three downtown congregations in Atlanta; there is a research project focused on graduates within a major evangelical seminary; the elaboration of a Mujerista theology through the work of Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz holds some potential as an engagement beyond the congregational, but the work begins in a reformation of theology within a group of 'theologians and pastoral agents' (Isasi-Diaz, 1998, p. 237); Siobhan Garrigan's case study is into Irish Catholic

Eucharistic practice; Mary McClintock Fulkerson's research on the culture of places lies with a study of a multi-racial congregation; and Natalie Wigg-Stevenson explores how theology is produced within a local congregation. All these studies are openings to lived reality but the field is limited to a congregational/faith group field. This is less than the force of Scharen's argument can take the use of fieldwork.

My argument is that the lack of that step being taken here is because of a normative position in practical theology towards praxis-led research which tends towards a form of the Hauerwas strategy of discipleship/congregational formation. Scharen argues for fieldwork in theology in a way that needs a *poietic* action into material-social settings and yet his work fails to make that move. His commitment of research into 'the actual life of the church being attended to' (C. B. Scharen, 2012, loc.115) seems to take precedence over the force of his argument.



Figure 1.3

Patterning and movement of nature, ground floor, from gathering work,
Naming Fragments pilot project, Glencairn Tower, Motherwell 2011.
Photo © derrick I watson 2011.

1.3.

Walking a path in the grass alongside another

OR Forming a practice of poietic hermeneutics

In *Lines: A Brief History* Tim Ingold, Chair of Social Anthropology at Aberdeen University, shows a photograph of a path made in grass by the artist Richard Long in 1967 (Ingold, 2007, p. 43). It was made by walking repeatedly across the grass, with the intention to ‘make a new art which was a new way of walking: walking as art’ (Tufnell, 2007, p. 39). This way of ‘making’, this *poietic* action takes place through movement and interruption to materials, the physicality of placing foot down on grass and the grass moving. The making can only take place with physical movement and the particularity of the materials and forces. It may be better to argue that this work is not a new way of making but simply opens and keeps open the understanding that in making we work with materials that are to be understood and have their own particularities. *To make*, is to undertake *poietic* action that necessarily participates in that which is beyond us and is not contained by us.

1.3.1

Sketching a response – 2

Tim Ingold sets out this opening and keeping open of the action of making through a language of *textility* (Ingold, 2010a, p. 92). He sets this against the *hylomorphic* model of making which he argues has been the dominant mode of understanding the activity of making since the Renaissance, although the roots of it lie within Aristotle’s depiction of making through bringing together form and matter. The hylomorphic model depicts an agent imposing form

upon neutral matter. Art and making then become about the nature and quality of the form to be depicted, the thought, the idea – creative imagination becomes the primary aspect of making and the material of making becomes an irrelevance in the valuing of what is made. In that move, Ingold identifies a loss in the processes of making. There is a loss in the valuing of ‘following the materials’ – the *textility* of what comes to hand in any making is of little worth. The practitioner who works with the ‘textility of making’ feels the grain of the wood, knows the flaking of a stone – they are ‘wayfarers in a terrain of tactile and sensuous’ learning of distinct and particular materials and relations and forces towards a new making. Elsewhere Ingold will work out this wayfaring amongst others in terms of attending to the lines of others (Ingold, 2015, loc.3246). I am arguing that the elision of *poiesis* within a practical theology discourse stems from a commitment to a hylomorphic understanding of making and that a more adequate understanding of the textility of making opens up the prospect of developing a *poietic* knowing in practical theology.

This prospect has recently been seen also by Heather Walton. In her address to BIAPT in the summer of 2013 she argued for a reclaiming in practical theology of ‘...the extraordinary energy of the poetics of everyday life’ (Heather Walton, 2014, p. 16). She continues to position it as a mimetic action (Heather Walton, 2014, p. 13) but sees the disparity between the ideal and the implementation into production as opening towards life, drawing on resources in Henri Lefebvre towards living poetically as a ‘restless, transformative’ action to reshape everyday life. I argue that it is the *textility* of such living that opens towards the life rather than the disparity from the ideal. But the direction of our concerns is similar. My work is a step in the reclaiming that Walton raises, working in the local particularities of De Certeau as

generating moments of resistance (Heather Walton, 2014, p. 14) through attentiveness towards a new local making.

There is an experience that Ingold explores in research, in contrast to the positioning of face to face, of walking alongside each other, sensitive to the movement and walking, the looking of the other, adjusting to it, a reflexive knowing that is continually improvising the next step together, the making of the next step (Ingold, 2013, p. 106). This is a *poietic* movement that offers potential for local walking together, opening towards the next step. My research makes such a step in the local site of Cathcart, Glasgow.



colours



writings



secret places

Figure 1.4

My analytical expression of the tracings of living left behind, from gathering work, *Naming Fragments* pilot project, Glencairn Tower, Motherwell 2011. Photo © derrick I watson 2011.

1.4.

Entangled reflexivity in close practice

OR being honest about our situating selves but still acting

The thesis argues towards *poietic* practices of remaking and new becomings. These situated practices take place across sites which are more than the church. Questions of power and hegemonic narrative are potentially significant within such approaches – how do we acknowledge our situatedness and yet still act *poietically* in close practice without bringing a totalising narrative upon those we walk alongside, with whom we are becoming? What does reflexivity look like in a lived practice of *correspondence* through a community?

In response to that question, I argue here for a form of reflexivity that sits towards one end of a spectrum of definitions which are expressed in practical theology along a commitment to ‘situated-ness’. I will call this form *entangled reflexivity*⁶.

Reflexivity is a growing discourse across a number of fields. It is a contested term and there are wide variations on what is meant by it. Pete Ward argues for a starting point in perceiving the church as both theological and social/cultural, shaping a framework in developing ethnographic tools for its study. He understands ‘(r)eflection, reflexivity and representation [to] cluster a series of approaches to research...reflexively concerned with the interaction between the site of study and the self as a gendered, positioned and traditioned subject’ (Ward, 2012, p. 7). This sense of a clustering of reflective and reflexive approaches is helpful in setting the work of *representing* research as a key component of the clustering, an aspect that bears into in the later work of re-siting within my research, but there is little clarity on the relations between reflection and reflexivity at this point. I will approach that question

⁶ Here I acknowledge the usefulness of the term ‘entangled’ within the conceptual framework of the Christian Materialism of Baker, James & Reader (Baker, James, & Reader, 2015)

through the depiction of two models along a reflexive spectrum which are live models within the current field of Practical Theology. I will develop the second of these models in relation to the wider discourse around reflexivity and begin to position works of re-siting as *poietic* critical distancing actions of an entangled reflexivity.

1.4.1

Questioning reflexivity: two ends of a spectrum

In a roundtable discussion on 'Narrative & Reflexivity in the Study of Religion' held at the University of Chester in November 2014, under the auspices of *The Religious Studies Project*, reflexivity was described in a number of ways, both in relation to reflection and to auto-ethnography. Ethan Quillan, returning to the work of Clifford Geertz, spoke of a shift in awareness, in the writing up of anthropological work, towards the recognition that 'I am doing the writing'. There is a self-worked, creative process taking place in the act of writing up. Quillan uses the terms 'reflexivity' and 'auto-ethnography' interchangeably to speak about this shifting awareness towards a literary creative aspect in the act of writing up of research. Elaine Graham speaks of peeling back the layers of an onion – from the awareness of a standpoint (reflection); through asking *what am I doing with that standpoint?* (reflexivity); towards a problematizing of that position where the self becomes the research issue (auto-ethnography). Dawn Llewellyn distinguishes reflexivity from reflection through a language of situated-ness – use social location as a critical lens to analyse the generation of the research

and its impact on those involved. What is common through the responses is that reflexivity carries notions of both subjectivity and situated-ness in a wider social context. Reflexivity pushes beyond self-understanding towards wider social relations. And yet how these two aspects of reflexivity bear upon one another, I argue, is producing something of a spectrum of responses within practical theology.

The two endpoints of this spectrum can be set around the stability of the reflexive subject and the weight given to 'situated-ness' in any reflexive practice. The model at one end of this spectrum holds to a 'more or less' stable subject (practitioner) who can grow and develop and act with agency under a growing self-awareness through self-reflexive understandings of ongoing situations – the goal here is improved practice of the subject.

One recent expression of this lies with Clare Watkins. Writing out of her experience in theological action research models within ecclesial settings, the key work of reflexivity is directed towards the researcher. When describing the value of reflexivity in research, as it is being expressed within a cluster of chapters exploring ethnographic work in ecclesial settings, that value is described in terms of the development of the practitioner:

What we have, however, in the three chapters presented in this cluster, is not only a vivid witness to careful scholarship, but also a self-disclosure from the scholars themselves, as each in turn narrates and reflects in some way on the processes of the ecclesiological research they have undertaken...This self-awareness and reflexivity is being recognized and developed as a key part of practical theology. Here I welcome such a self-reflective voice for its recognition of that intractable tradition of the theologian as a person of faith, on a journey much like the rest of the faithful, through

their "academic" vocation. But I am also encouraged as such a style highlights what is becoming a key area for concern and development in concrete ecclesiology, and in practical theology as a whole—the spirituality and formation of the practical-theological scholar.

(Watkins, 2015, p. 140)

The model at the other end of the spectrum suggests that there is a subject continually re-constructing themselves in the light of fluctuating situations which lie in some measure beyond their control – the goal here is developing more just and fruitful situations, in which the subject is a player towards that wider social reconstruction which may, in turn bear significantly on the reconstructing subject. Heather Walton is suggestive, recently, of this less secure subject exploring a mutual situatedness:

When these (reflexive) questions are posed, the intention is not simply to generate self-knowledge (although this remains important) but rather to understand the self within the context of the political and social world through which it is being continually shaped and formed.

(H. Walton, 2014a, p. xvi)

This distinction in reflexive models within practical theology first plays out in the work of John Reader. In *Reconstructing Practical Theology* Reader distinguishes his own position on the question of reflexivity from that set out by Graham, Walton and Ward, in *Theological Reflection: Methods*, under the approach of 'Theology by Heart'. He refers to their definition:

This inward movement illustrates what we will later explore as reflexivity: the concern to understand more deeply the ways of the self, positioned within the networks of society. Here, created by God, the reflexive self seeks to understand more profoundly

the nature of its own creation and lifelong relationship with God as a being whose days are formed as a book.

(Graham, Walton and Ward, quoted in Reader, 2008, p. 15)

This definition clearly carries both aspects earlier set out of subjectivity and situated-ness. Reader, however, sees a stability of the subject here which is to be questioned. By shifting the theoretical discourse on the language of reflexivity from a psychologically based one towards a sociologically based one, using the work of Ulrich Beck, he destabilises the security of the subject in its social situated-ness,

...we are dealing with a very different concept of reflexivity, one which appears to be in sharp contrast to that employed within practical theology. It does not mean a self-conscious pursuit of greater self-awareness that leads to heightened understanding and control over one's life, but processes that are occurring as a result of global change and that undermine the previous structures of social and personal life. One has no choice but to choose how to construct one's life, even though one may not have the necessary resources to do this.

(Reader, 2008, pp. 16, 17)

His distinction is aligning with typologies of reflexivity across the social sciences which also recognise this spectrum. Finlay acknowledges that reflexivity is 'now a defining feature of qualitative research' which 'embrace(s) the negotiated and socially constructed nature of research experience...the question (is) *how to do it?*' (Finlay, 2002, pp. 211, 212). She sets out a five-fold depiction of a range of forms of reflexivity moving from 'introspective' through to

‘discursive deconstruction’⁷, along a similar thread of increasing situational *unknotting*. The latter typology provides a similar kind of mapping to *entangled reflexivity* which shapes, through bricolage narrative work, multiple depictions of the research exploring “...something of a ‘real’ story while acknowledging its partial, tentative status.” (Finlay, 2002, p. 224, quoting Harvey). Bryant, working in creative research methodologies, describes this approach as

...writing texts differently to account for ambiguity and multiplicity of meaning...experimenting with words, genres and writing forms to enable multiple voices and multiple stories to engage with meaning making reflexively...(creating) a reflexive space for participants and/or researchers

(Bryant, 2016, p. 6)

But this focus on the text and writing also sets a difference to reflexivity as part of an action of correspondence within a material-discursive commitment. Finlay, in developing her typology in later writing, changes the name of this fifth mapping to *ironic deconstruction* (Finlay, 2003, p. 14), emphasising the *discursive* context of the approach.

Seeking ‘deep faithfulness to material processes’ (Baker et al., 2015, p. 2), I come to reflexive practices as an answering work of *corresponding*. A language of *entanglement* positions this reflexivity within processes of being attentive to and changing material sites in *poietic* action, while continually being formed in the midst of those entanglements

⁷ The five typologies are: introspective reflexivity; intersubjective reflexivity; mutual collaboration; as social critique; discursive deconstruction. Finlay names these in a field ‘full of muddy ambiguity and multiple trails’ as ‘maps through the swamp’ (Finlay, 2002, p. 212)

‘...one becomes a subject by being fully immersed in the activities to which one is called rather than already being a subject who chooses to become involved’

(Baker et al., 2015, p. 182)

Alvesson⁸, setting out four variations to reflexivity⁹ in arguing for mixed approaches opens also towards a multi-voicing through which the researcher is being formed situationally in the research

Linking research texts to Bakhtin’s (1981) notion of a ‘heteroglossia’ – a ‘dynamic multiplicity of voices, genres and social languages’ ...we do not simply ‘bring the self to the field’ so much as ‘create the self in the field’

(Mats Alvesson et al., 2008)

In a reassessment by Denzin of the presenting of interviews within qualitative research as works of shared experience he describes an approach that opens up an entangled work of reflexivity in making that wrestles against enacting a hegemonic narrative in the research:

The interview’s meanings are contextual, improvised and performative...The interview is an active text, a site where meaning is created and performed. When performed, the interview text creates the world, giving the world its situated meaningfulness.

(N. K. Denzin, 2001, p. 25)

⁸ Alvesson opens up a ‘poetic hermeneutics’ through his assessment of reflexive methodologies (M. Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 123) but the emphasis lies on a metaphorical use of language in research writing rather than an act of material-discursive engagement in local *textilities*, under a correspondence approach

⁹ The four variants are: multi-perspective; multi-voicing; positioning; and destabilizing (Mats Alvesson, Hardy, & Harley, 2008)

Here Denzin also intends a re-performing of those improvisations as the construction of acts of critical distancing through the gatherings of the narratives of the interviews which open up new space to explore – ‘the meanings of lived experiences are inscribed and made visible in these performances’ (N. K. Denzin, 2001, p. 26). While focusing on performative *writing*, Denzin also opens the prospect of a wider work of remaking through creative critical distancing work producing space for others:

I seek an interpretive social science that is simultaneously autoethnographic, vulnerable, performative and critical....It is a way of being in the world, a way of writing, hearing and listening. Viewing culture as a complex performative process, it seeks to understand how people enact and construct meaning in their daily lives. This is a return to narrative as a political act; a social science that has learned how to critically use the reflexive, dialogical interview. This social science inserts itself in the world in an empowering way. It uses narrated words and stories to fashion performance texts that imagine new worlds.

(N. K. Denzin, 2001, p. 43)

This making of a critical performative work as a distancing device within which new reflexivity can be undertaken and where space occurs for re-making, is defined by Denzin in an analysis of a 1989 film of the Vietnamese director Trin T. Minh. The first part of the film is constructed as a series of objective, authentic, storied interviews with Vietnamese women who are discussing identity in the context of marriage to either Vietnamese or foreign men. A critical space is then constructed in the film through the filmmaker beginning to open up the constructed-ness of these ‘authentic’ voices:

Self-reflexivity does not translate into personal style, or a preoccupation with method. It rather centers on the reflexive interval that defines representation, “the place in which the play within the textual frame is a play on this very frame, hence on the borderlines of the textual and the extra-textual” ... The film becomes a site for multiple experiences...In using these interpretive strategies, Trinh creates the space for the viewer (and listener) to critically appraise the politics of representation that structure the documentary text.

(N. K. Denzin, 2012, pp. 346, 347)

Entangled reflexivity, as an action of *correspondence* undertaken through a material-discursive intervention, seeks to displace hegemonic action through the forming of reflective practice in this critical distancing action of making, giving shape to the answering work of *correspondence*. Within practical theology, Eric Stoddart is developing an approach to practising this kind of reflexivity across a community.

1.4.2

Committing to an entangled reflexivity within the project

Eric Stoddart’s concept of critical discipleship builds more detail into that ambiguous reflexivity that is being teased out in Reader’s first clarification of distinct differences in

understanding the term in practical theology. Stoddart sets out a beautiful depiction of the context of reflexivity under this end of the spectrum:

...we participate in Christ's encounter with embodied people; people whose bodies are sites of injustice, marginalization, poverty and disease – just as other bodies are sites of justice, incorporation and flourishing

(Stoddart, 2014a, loc.2603)

This depiction carries the sense of particular 'sites' being both subject (person) and yet taking place through social structures in some way. The interwoven subjectivity and situational event of the person present in this depiction is helpful in understanding where a key issue lies, for Stoddart¹⁰, for Reader, and for me, in the models of reflexivity that lie towards the other end of the spectrum. Stoddart argues for a reflexivity that in practice takes account of these situational lines of occurrence through which these bodies, as subjects, are taking place, at each stage of research, across the relations of the researched site. Reflexivity, under this model does not appear simply as a means to grow and develop as an agent of change, but as potentially deconstructive of the subject through a clarifying of internalized situational relations of power, as they are enacted socially, culturally, materially and politically. We open our own situated bodies as sites knotted in relations of power and

¹⁰ Stoddart seeks to radicalise the research process, in significant part, he argues, because of the strength of the security of the rational subject which inheres unobtrusively in much practical theology. He argues that much practical theology focuses on relations between subjects rather than relations through which subjects are being made. Following Foucault, these structural relations through which the subject is being constructed are internalized in the practices of the subject and are normalised in that internalization. Stoddart pushes this line towards a requirement to be critical of our own faith (Stoddart, 2014a, loc. 1233) as a means of opening our own situated bodies in research practice – attending to the ways in which '...cultural, social, political structures [shape us] ...carry and reinforce behaviour' (Stoddart, 2014a, loc. 2452). The notion of reflexivity is again, here put beautifully as a 'political understanding of pastoral care' (Stoddart, 2014a, loc. 2452).

powerlessness, of justice and injustice. We ourselves, as situated witnessing people are being unknotted in the research process, an anti-hegemonic positioning.

To return to Graham, in more recent work this latter model of reflexivity is present in a way that Reader does not allow her in 2008, and is also being pushed further in terms of the entanglement of the subject in situatedness. Within an unpublished conference paper given at the 'Imagining the posthuman' conference at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology in 2013 *Manifestations of the Postsecular Emerging Within Discourses of Posthumanism*, the term 'reflexivity' occurs twice. In the first use, the term is identified as 'self-awareness' (E. L. Graham, 2013, p. 7) but that awareness is not a simple 'self-awareness'. Referring to Bruno Latour's description of two processes, one of 'purification', under a modernist commitment to setting boundaries, and one of 'translation', where those boundaries and ontological essences are broken down in the wake of the fruitfulness of the modernist paradigm, reflexivity is used to refer to this double awareness of both the boundaries and their social and ideological constructedness. In the second use of the term 'reflexivity' it is one of the axiomatic consequences of becoming aware of differing options in believing - reflexivity is to do with the construction of a position in contexts of difference (E. L. Graham, 2013, p. 15). And within the paper these contexts of difference are not bounded, essentialist subjects or human beings or sites but are entangled networks, situated relationalities with contested boundaries where Graham uses the term 'posthuman' to 'interrogate definitions of the boundaries of being human'.

In other words, the biological and the technological, the material (or 'real') and the virtual are co-existent and co-evolving. The inability to disentangle everyday life from

its (inter)dependence upon or with advanced technologies renders the classical humanist subject obsolete.

(E. L. Graham, 2013, p. 8)

Reflexivity here is occurring through a situatedness which ‘...is not a self-appointed and self-designed subject position, but rather a collectively shared and constructed, jointly occupied spatiotemporal territory [where] the “politics of location” [requires] an intervention of others’ (R. Braidotti, 2011a, p. 16).

I will take *entangled* reflexivity into the research work, attentive to this situational intervention of ourselves and others in our entanglement in the *material-discursive* local site, seeking to provide resources for a recorded work of *correspondence* in the midst of critical distancing poietic works of re-making.

2. GATHERING:

attending to the particular

Chapter 2 constructs a validating methodology in shaping this interruptive apparatus. I argue for performative ethnography, within a wisdom trajectory, as a structuring device for the church. Here I develop a Field Text and a Research Text through this methodology to resource a kinetic interruptive work that carries methodological and theological validity.

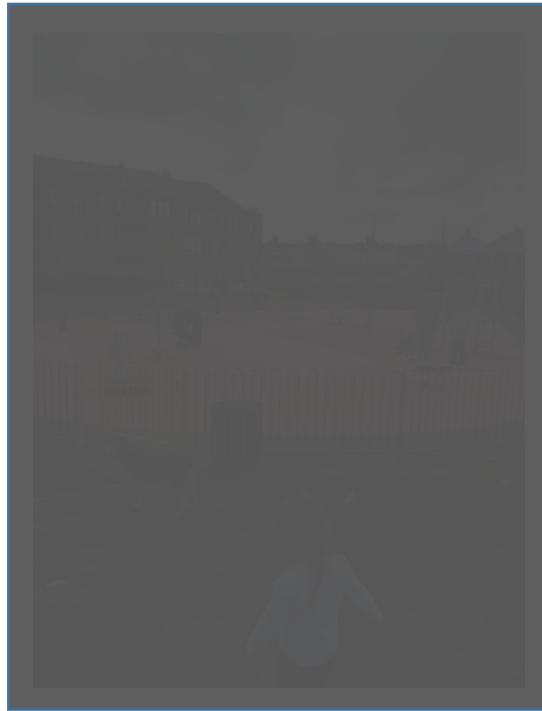


Figure 2.1

Participant photo from gathering work, #imaginingcommonties project 2015.
Awaiting permissions.

2.1

A Validating Methodology

OR securing the everyday and the particular

For even longer, Denzin (1999) has urged a new movement in qualitative inquiry in which researchers "take up their pens" (and their cameras, paintbrushes, bodies, and voices) "so that we might conduct our own ground-level guerrilla warfare against the oppressive structures of our every-day lives"...This is the performative turn in qualitative research.

(Finley, 2011, p. 442)

Within the *Naming Fragments* pilot project in Motherwell, an interrupting performative moment took place in a large scale installation, where images were projected onto Glencairn Tower shortly before its demolition. The groundwork research for the installation took place through the traces of lives lived within the tower – wall colours, graffiti, pictures, scraps and natural growths across walls. This tracing work across remnants and moments of abandonment had become necessary after the local council moved the programme for decanting residents forward by a year. The intent for the project had been to engage directly in qualitative research with the residents prior to their removal. The pilot project brought clarity to a twofold action in my research around acts of gathering and performative interruptions in local places. But the opportunity to develop the research within a new ministry setting in Cathcart in the south side of Glasgow brought the need to develop a valid and appropriate method for working not simply with traces of lives and the remnants of lives lived within a site but with those who were living here now.

That question of the validity of the research is stark. Throughout my research I have been working with momentary, particular, ephemeral, and everyday fragments of living and exploring the making of temporary installations which can interrupt wider discourses for a

moment through those fragments. This is not quantitative research - it is a form of bricolage.

Kincheloe asserts the direction of critical bricolage practices:

...in the critical hermeneutical dimension of the bricolage, the act of understanding is merely one part – albeit an inseparable part – of counterhegemonic *action*.

(Kincheloe, 2005, p. 338)

This assertion sets out two aspects to critical bricolage which align with the twofold actions of *gathering* and *re-siting* as interruptive work developed in the *Naming Fragments* pilot project, aspects which are summarised by Rogers on Kincheloe's project as:

...bricoleurs not only seek to develop complex understandings of a phenomenon (e.g., an understanding of the multiplicity of ways phenomena can be interpreted), they aim to disrupt imbalances of power, social injustice, marginalization, and oppression perpetrated through traditional meaning-making practices.

(Rogers, 2012, p. 8)

A broad validating framework to bricolage lies in performative ethnography.

2.1.1.

Performative Ethnography as a validating structure

This performance paradigm travels from theories of critical pedagogy to views of performance as intervention, interruption and resistance

(N. Denzin, 2006, p. 327)

'Performance' has been defined as an essentially contested concept - there is critical value in diverse understandings of the term co-existing (Madison & Hamera, 2006, p. xi), where the

differences provoke continuing explorations of the meaning of the term (Dwight Conquergood, 1995, p. 137). I am working with a concept of performance that has been shaped through the work of Dwight Conquergood as a form of ethnographic knowing and intervention. This particular dynamic of moving through ways of knowing towards interventions in the material-social world characterises approaches carrying differing terminology: 'performance ethnography' (Conquergood); performance ethnography/pedagogy (Denzin); performance of possibilities & critical ethnography (Madison); critical pedagogy (Kincheloe). Each carries this particular dynamic in some form and makes conscious and direct reference to each other. Paul Atkinson's critical review of Denzin's *Performance Ethnography* situates Denzin within 'a relatively small but highly creative and productive group' developing work around interactionist ethnographic texts (Atkinson, 2004, p. 107). Atkinson's critique of Denzin is itself part of that contesting work which situates Denzin's approach as 'performance texts deriving from ethnography' distinct from 'ethnographies of performance' (Atkinson, 2004). This critique opens towards decisions being made on where performance work is being situated within a triad of terms set out by Conquergood¹¹.

Conquergood's early refining of a performance trajectory set out as a triad of 'mimesis-poiesis-kinesis' (Dwight Conquergood, 1998, p. 31) marks a 'small revolution' (Madison & Hamera, 2006, p. xii) in performance approaches that bears fruit through these

¹¹ Very little work written exploring connections between performance ethnography and areas of practical theology. Tom Beaudoin carried a blog in 2015 making first approaches to the work of Conquergood. In the 3rd part he points to the potential difficulties of practical theology in opening to the vulnerability of multiple and open narratives/performances of others... <http://practicaltheology.org/2015/06/representing-practice-an-assist-from-dwight-conquergood-part-3-of-3/>

linked research frameworks. In his seminal essay *Rethinking Ethnography* Conquergood develops Victor Turner's redefining of human beings as *homo performans* – an aliveness marked through '...the creative, playful, provisional, imaginative, articulate expressions' of making life here (Dwight Conquergood, 1991, p. 187). He situates ethnographers '...within the delicately negotiated and fragile "face-work"...' of everyday living. The triad of 'mimesis-poiesis-kinesis' is first set out in a paper in 1992 as a way to trace the development of understandings of performance in cultural studies (Dwight Conquergood, 1992).

Conquergood positions Victor Turner as a key figure in shifting understandings of performance within critical studies from those representing life (*mimesis*) towards the making of performances as cultural constructions (*poiesis*). The former approach, he argues, reinforces the separation between a performance and the life that it seeks to represent (Dwight Conquergood, 1998, p. 31). Turner's commitment to understanding the making of a performative action moved approaches to performance from *mimesis* to *poiesis* but in doing so also opens the way for a further development towards *kinesis*. If performances can be analysed as constructions occurring out of existing discourses, they can also function as re-makings, which may critique and lie at a critical distance from existing public or master discourses. The performance seeks to interrupt or disturb those existing discourses through a re-making, '...those restless energies that transgress boundaries and trouble closure' (Dwight Conquergood, 1995, p. 138). *Kinesis* situates a new making or a re-making which takes place as an intervention, problematizing *what is* (Dwight Conquergood, 1998, p. 32).

Nor is *performance* simply limited to the dramatized act. From the ‘...waitress’ joke’ to the ‘...condemned prisoners’ conversations, *performance* takes place across human interaction (Donker, 2007, p. 821). Performance ethnography takes place as an action of knowing, experiencing and intervening. Susan Finley assesses the impact of a performative turn in critical arts-based research where performativity becomes ‘...the writing and rewriting of meanings to create a dynamic and open dialogue that continually disrupts the authority of metanarratives...’ (Finley, 2011, p. 442) using ‘...affective experiences, senses and emotions...where the body is a tool for gathering and exploring meaning...’ (Finley, 2011, p. 444). I am making similar shifts. My research is an act of *poiesis* within this second part which prepares the ground for a *performative kinesis* in the third part as an action of interruption.

2.1.2

Structuring the methodology in the text

In undertaking this work I am determining a structural path to my analysis that follows the broad framework set out by Norman Denzin & Yvonna Lincoln in tracing recent interpretive developments in qualitative research within this mode of interruptive performance. This moves from the *making* of a Field Text developing through to a performative action. Denzin works with text and scripts. He is verbally based, producing narratives and poems as interruptive moments into wider discourses. My path works through a critical arts-based research mode involving material installation and body work as a significant performative action but the structure and language of Denzin is helpful in staging

the development of the research through *poiesis* to *kinesis* – the making of an interpretive work that evokes local interruptive action.

This second section of the thesis, *'Gathering'*, takes place within this framework as a 'pre-performance' work, with a process of 'imaginative textual rehearsal' validated through criteria such as data sufficiency, critical interpretation and script craftsmanship (multiple voices, persuasive, advocacy) – a work of *poiesis*, a making of meaning, acknowledging the inherent interpretive elements of the work using performative validating criteria set out by Cho & Trent (Cho & Trent, 2009). It works within Denzin's research structure: create the Field Text; shape a working interpretive document – a Research Text. The third section of the thesis, *'Crafting Interruptions'*, will take forward a kinetic tier of performance of a public text, developed out of that Research Text, into the local social-material space.

This produces a conceptual structure to the shaping of the methodology through the text that can be depicted in the following diagram:

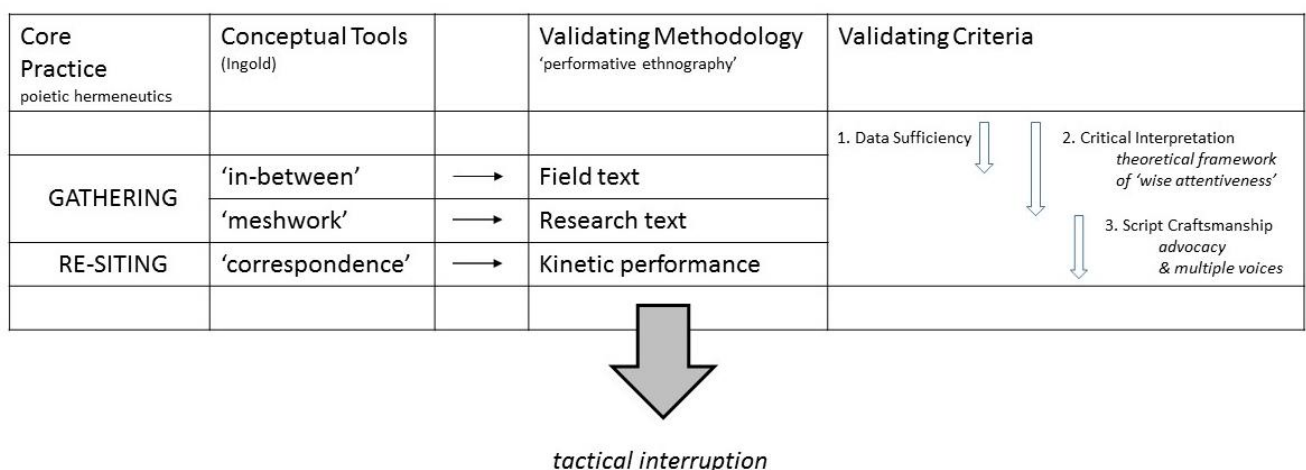




Figure 2.2

Images taken of the back pages of Rev. Robert Wodrow's Shorter Catechism. Photos © derrick I watson 2014, used with permission from University of Glasgow, Department of Special Collections.

2.2

Making 'the Field Text'

The three images on the previous page are from the personal copy of the Shorter Catechism used by Robert Wodrow, Minister of Eastwood Parish Church, 1703 – 1734. The book is held in the archives of Glasgow University. Eastwood is the neighbouring parish to Cathcart, within which my own faith community is situated, and at times Eastwood held charge over Cathcart, following the Reformation. Most days I pass the site of Wodrow's manse and the remnants of the old Parish Church where a memorial to him stands on the position of the pulpit, from where he preached. He is best known for his work *The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution* published in 1722-23 a work which grew out of his own family involvement in 'The Killing Times', a now ubiquitous description of the period which arose from his writings. He was born close to Glasgow Cross, with his father, a Presbyterian minister, on the run from Government troops.

The Shorter Catechism was a teaching tool that Wodrow used in pastoral work with the congregation of the parish. At the back of the book, on the blank leaves, there are listings and annotations of names and addresses, with various markings against them covering the period 1702 – 1729 (Wodrow, 1702 - 1729). But amongst the text and the notes are small drawings, sketches, of faces, of ships, of letters. It is not known who made the drawings. I would like to think it is one of his six children who is scribbling across the pages. Whether or not it is, the sketches suggest his own site of everyday life as interweaving his pastoral work – did he draw the pictures himself, for his children to see? What were the distractions or occasions through which these small sketches arose in the midst of these highly detailed pastoral and geographical records, scripted across years on paper at the back of the Shorter

Catechism, which was issued, under the Act of the Scottish Parliament in 1648, as part of an intended religious uniformity across the country.

I am referencing these small everyday sketches at the back of Wodrow's catechism as a local line of attunement towards my own developing practice. Wodrow studied the local site. In a letter to his friend, Edward Lhywd, at the Ashmolean in Oxford he writes:

My Lott is by Providence cast in the parish of Eastwood, and my house within a quarter of mile from the Aldhouse Bourn, wher you and I wer a Lithoscopying.

(M'Crie, 1842, p. 33)

'Lithoscopying', the searching out of stones and the geology of a place, marked an ongoing work of Wodrow¹² but he also drew this sense of searching and gathering in the everyday as a practice of faith. In his *Analecta*, he gathers narratives of the lives of people that he knows, in astonishing local detail, with the intention to explore God's work in the everyday. His later editors read an apologetic reference into his 1728 depiction of his work in '...the consequence that may seem to be attached to matters of little moment or trifling interest' (Wodrow & Leishman, 1842, p. 33).

¹² For discussion on Wodrow in his geographic context of pursuing local chorographic knowledge of the everyday, alongside Sibbald and map-making, see (Withers, 2001, pp. 86, 87)

2.2.1

Towards 'the everyday' as a research field

These threads of the everyday, of embodied local narrative, of geologies and micro-geographies of place, of small moments, also weave through my research and the making of my Field Text, but my path has come differently. The research work in Motherwell which culminated in the pilot project *Naming Fragments* had been undertaken through a context which I knew – I knew the public discourses around Glencairn Tower and I knew dissonance between those discourses and the personal narratives of people living within the tower. The research was being structured around that dissonance, exploring a participatory action through my faith community which intended to address that dissonance and our proximal entanglement in it. The Field Text within the Motherwell site was clearly defined around the lives of those within Glencairn Tower. Two key events took place which significantly altered the development of the thesis at that point in terms of the Field Text.

Firstly, the demolition of the tower was brought forward. The *Naming Fragments* project then became a first testing of a process rather than the work of the thesis, an exploration of the gathering of what were now *traces of lives* rather than the living narratives, and a re-siting of those everyday traces into the public discourse of the site. A momentary shift of that public discourse through the performative work of the projection was marked in my own experience as I stood in the midst of the public car park where people had gathered, on the evening of the installation. I spoke with people passionately wishing they had been able to know those who had lived in the tower. Part of what I learnt from the pilot project lay

with the value of this gathering and re-siting structure, but it needed extending in two particular ways: (1) I intended to work out the Field Text in the midst of the lives of people locally rather than simply in the traces of lives, as an act of greater collaboration and more detailed understanding; and (2) I needed to explore how to develop and record the interruptive moment in ways more adept than remembered conversations.

Secondly, a key event which significantly altered the developing thesis lay in a change of ministry location from Motherwell to Cathcart, in the south side of Glasgow. I moved just prior to the completion of the *Naming Fragments* pilot project. The defining of the Field Text in this new location took time. In the work of clarifying where the construction of my Field Text would now take place, I returned several times to a persistent question through which *Naming Fragments* had taken shape, to explore what it might mean within this new and unknown site in Glasgow.

I will chart the development of that persistent question through the Motherwell site and set out how this shaped the development of a distinct and particular field text in the Cathcart site.

a personal question

This question came very early into ministry: *how do I minister in a context of transient lives lived behind locked doors?* The radical shift in the context of ministry across the life of the Motherwell church, which lies behind the question, is present in two narratives of lives lived

in the land across from the church in Windmillhill Street. These are my personal constructions of lives lived close to me in ministry.

One life, born in 1918, living alongside the railway which fed the steelworks. Her father worked on the railway, a few yards from the church which her mum's aunt & uncle had begun 30 years or so before, in the early 1880s. In the 1920s she and her family had moved to the newly built 'model' tenements down the hill from the church, with outside toilets and communal back courts, built by her uncle to meet the industrial demand of steelworks and railways. A photograph is taken of children in the back courts in the 1920s and over 70 years later at least three of the children remained a part of the church.

Other lives (the plural is intended) lived in the tower built in the 1960s to replace those tenements, the first steel built tower in the UK. Those lives were lived post-demolition of the Ravenscraig Steelworks and in the midst of the material, social and emotional scars of that loss. I can think of a family whose kids came along to clubs, who were with us briefly but then moved onto a witness protection scheme; I can think of a family whose children we were about to dedicate, and on the Sunday morning going down to the flats to discover the husband in jail, the mother unconscious through drugs and the two young children being cared for by a very scared gran. And I can see a picture painted on a wall by a young Polish immigrant child whom I will never know, of a beautifully coloured house with a garden of flowers painted in a bedroom of one of the flats abandoned before demolition in November 2011. These lives were being lived for short periods within this tower block and were taking place in the midst of 147 flats accessed by one single door, which was locked.

Within the warp and weft of the everyday in these narratives, social and material patterns of living and relating here were being made and remade, altered, disrupted. The language of 'everyday' as a possible site of participation and interruption towards local flourishing began to be the thread that I carried into Cathcart.

2.2.2

Committing to 'sites of everyday praxis'

Two approaches to 'the everyday' have recently been drawn out of the literature developing around the term. John Storey, writing with the intent to 'clarify explanations of the development of everyday life as an object of study' (Storey, 2014, loc.70), summarises the two approaches:

...everyday life can be many things to many people, a site of parapraxes, for example... However, these different understandings can be divided, roughly, into two main groups, those that see everyday life as an ongoing human construction, only visible in social actions and Interactions, and those that see it as a passive receptacle of these actions and interactions.

(Storey, 2014, loc. 80)

Storey is intentionally seeking to provide an agreed concept of 'the everyday' through an analysis of various approaches undertaken within social studies. Tracing a primary cultural history of the term through the work of Raymond Williams, he builds along the path of the first of those main groups, the constructionist path. Storey draws upon Interactions with

Gramsci's term 'hegemony', describing processes of consent and control in social life, and discourses around space and place, through Cresswell, Massey, Lefebvre and de Certeau, to construct an understanding of 'the everyday' in terms of a continuing 'making of meaning' through material, embodied practices entangled in contested and enacted power, developed in relations expressed and told in 'a simultaneity of stories so far' (Massey, quoted in Storey, 2014, p. 135).

Storey himself views this defining work as a failure. While he has been able to make a case for a framework of understanding 'the everyday' he has failed to give a foundational definition that can be agreed (Storey, 2014, p. 122). But his 'failure of definition' may lie not so much in the framework developed but in the deeper question of the possibility of a foundational definition. A better question can be put – what can you do with the framework? Storey has set out his pursuit of definition within a broader context of repositioning cultural studies away from the 'politics by other means' of Stuart Hall (Storey, 2014, p. 122). In some ways this is an internal issues within cultural studies. But that repositioning work has also limited the core question of the book, towards seeking a foundational, agreed definition of 'the everyday', while neglecting the fruitfulness of what can come from asking – what can this definition do?

That persistent early question within my own personal journey – *how can I minister in a context of transient lives lived behind locked doors?* - which grew out of the experience of Glencairn Tower, amongst others, very quickly became more about *how do we flourish together?* This is part of the impact of Glencairn Tower. If this damage is being done to people

this close to the church, how are we implicated in these sites occurring and how do we make a difference in developing flourishing lives through our proximal entanglement to damaged sites? This is research work that intends change. The notes towards a framework for 'the everyday' set out by Storey can be taken forward under the question of 'what can this framework do towards flourishing?'

This approach has been more fruitfully developed by Sarah Pink, under a similar framework but with an activist agenda. Within my Research Proposal I located my work in relation to her argument that 'everyday life' is a 'site of activist practice' (Pink, 2012b, p. 5). Within that argument she positions 'practices' and 'places' as '...theoretical constructs...developed to understand things that are *already happening*' (Pink, 2012b, p. 29). She situates them as starting points for participatory knowing of 'what is taking place'. Her current work proposes a language of 'ethnographic places' as a co-produced work between the researcher-activist and the research site towards the making and the re-making of the everyday, a site where 'we make our worlds and our worlds make us' (Pink, 2012b, p. 5). That work of making is embodied and sensory, participatory:

The focus on place developed here works as an analytical construct to conceptualise fundamental aspects of how both ethnographers and participants in ethnographic research are emplaced in social, sensory and material contexts, characterised by and productive of particular power configurations, that they experience through their whole bodies and that are constantly changing (even if in very minor ways). In doing so it allows us to pursue the reflexive project of a sensory ethnography. The idea of place as lived but open invokes the inevitable question of how researchers themselves are entangled in, participate in the production of and are co-present in the

ethnographic places they share with research participants, their materialities and power relations.

(Pink, 2015, p. 15)

Under this model of implicated, embodied participation in the everyday, my work similarly commits to re-makings of the local site through constructs which arise through the everyday,

...combining, connecting and interweaving of theory, experience, reflection, discourse, memory and imagination... material and sensorial presence...[where]... meanings are constituted...through...participation.

(Pink, 2015, p. 48)

Within my previous ministry setting of Motherwell, a post-industrial town in Lanarkshire, I worked with those living precarious lives. My move to ministry in Cathcart, south Glasgow, in 2011 has brought a shift in language towards a more structural, reflexive¹³ (Rose & Tolia-Kelly, 2012, pp. 3-4), (Rose, 2012, p. 197) exploration of marginalising relations in the everyday. The Field Text through which this methodological framework will be shaped then, is constructed through *sites of everyday praxis*. Four of these were identified.

¹³ I am using the term 'reflexive' primarily under Walsh's fourth category within his typology (Walsh, 2003, p. 61), referring to wider contextual forces (Reader, 2008) but conditioning it to Rose's more complex and nuanced integration of a situated interpreter also continuing to act through those forces of production – an entangled reflexivity, see 1.3.

2.2.3

Committing here to particular sites

These four sites of everyday praxis are not intended to be comprehensive or representative, but particular. The Field and Research Texts that are made through these sites are not the only way to construe or shape what is taking place. Here I set out why the sites were chosen and particular issues and negotiations that arose in the midst of becoming entangled in these local patterns of living.

Problems in Ashmore Crescent & why it mattered

Ashmore Crescent was built on the site of the old Merrylee Primary School which had been demolished subsequent to a new school being built towards the bottom end of the Merrylee housing scheme. One reason that I wanted to draw the newly arriving residents into the research lay with conversations that I had shared with existing residents in Merrylee, who had sought tenancy in the new housing but had been prevented from making successful applications because the housing was intended for tenants from other parts of south Glasgow who were being moved to make way for urban development, primarily the large scale demolition and remaking of Pollokshaws. There were felt tensions expressed to me in the course of ministry between those living in the Merrylee scheme and the Ashmore Crescent development. Merrylee is becoming an increasingly privately let housing scheme with developing neighbour tensions through a loss of stability. This was producing a desire to move towards the new local housing area of Ashmore Crescent, which was being let by a housing

association. But local residents were being prevented politically from applying, in order to allow those in other areas to move in. The experience of those moving into Ashmore Crescent and how they engaged and made meaning in this new setting held interest.

The process of developing participant relations within Ashmore Crescent lay in being present within the small development for a period of time. Across May 2013 I regularly began walking through the small development, putting information sheets into every door, returning and knocking every door until I managed to speak with someone within the home. This process continued across the summer of 2013, with participants committing to take part from May through to October.

There were multiple issues in the development of participants here. Five participants committed across the period. Two of these went to completion. A sixth began discussions but the need to sign a consent form immediately brought a withdrawal and a refusal to engage further. A number of other households indicated interest but health issues in relation to themselves or their partner meant that this openness did not develop into participation. A further barrier lay with language issues. There is a significant mix of refugees and migrants within the new development and the difficulties of language prevented sufficient communication and trust to develop and allow the work to take place. Several revisits were scheduled to open households with the request to meet with another member of the household but there was little consistency in holding to those rescheduled times.

Of those who committed, two completed the consent forms but did not carry out the requested work due to a breakdown of personal relationships and a moving on from the housing development; one completed the consent form and took pictures but consistently missed scheduled visits across a number of months to carry out the final interview. Of the two participants who completed the project, one was asked to participate as carrying a possibly distinct voice from those living in the new development, which only became apparent in the door-to-door work. The research project sought to explore meaning-making in the streets and spaces of the site of Cathcart. In the visits to Ashmore Crescent I had become aware that a significant number of the inhabitants were housebound in some way. I wanted to draw that particular sense of 'micro-meaning making' in this estate into the local research in some way. Jonny, the participant, had shown interest in the project when I first met him, I returned at a later point and explored with him about participating in this very particular way. The fifth participant, Rachel, was one of the last that I managed to meet with, in October 2013.

How does my awareness of the issues present in my own development of this group bear into the research? One of the most beautifully rich interviews occurs through the shift that took place in the decision made to explore a housebound setting in the midst of this site – I would not have gone this route without the difficulties of engagement. The reality of forming this research in the midst of crossing lives between myself as researcher and those in the estate became apparent at a number of points. One of the implications of this lies in the value that this is not a systematic generalised summary of the lives of those living on this development. This is a very particular expression of living *here* which can creatively intervene in the public discourse of *here*.

I write at times in my own reflections across the process of developing the research in this setting - a recognition that those who fully participated had a stability in their lives, and that a number of other potential participants were unable to take to completion because of transient and pressured lives, and with issues of trust and language. There is a recognition here that this project is as much about the development of an approach which can be undertaken across extended periods of time to allow those narratives of fear and disconnectedness to be drawn into a work of remaking. This current project, structurally through time limits, has produced research participants who carry a stability in their lives. Within this participant group, the three participants who did not go to completion had circumstances in their lives which overwhelmed the work of the project, and where the relationship had not developed strongly enough to cope with that overwhelming. With regard to the sixth possible participant who withdrew at the point of written consent, again the demands of the research project could not overcome anxieties about participating in a context where trust had not yet developed.

Within the other groups this limited timescale, arising in part through my recent move into Cathcart, also gave a shape in relationships which led to a characteristic of stability amongst the participants in each grouping.

The Dogwalking group

The decision to develop a group under this heading lay in time spent walking with a friend who had grown up around Cathcart. My early perceptions around 'the feel' of this new place

lay with a series of lines which seemed to be ways to understand how people were relating to one another across Cathcart, lines such as Clarkston Road, or the railway line, the Cathcart Circle. Through our walking together and talking, a different sense of this place arose. The Linn Park which lies either side of the River Cart and links across to Old Cathcart Cemetery seemed to be like lungs which allowed people to breathe and open up. The park is at a remove from key roads and transport, and it is a park that is a walking place. Dog walkers were chosen to draw from this area, due to their characteristic presence across the park and cemetery, and as those who regularly use these 'breathing spaces'.

The primary approach to developing this group lay with word of mouth and with adverts placed in local pet food stores who catered for dog walkers. Five participants agreed to participate. Four completed the project, which consisted of two couples. One of those couples carried out a joint work, the second couple carried out independent studies. The fifth participant chose to use his own camera to take photos, but due to a technical problem they failed to process. He chose not to take it forward, subsequent to this problem. The remaining participants again carried a certain stability in their patterns of life.

Cathcart Barbers

The group arose out of an early positioning of the research work to include those using and working in shops along Clarkston Road. The early assessments brought a decision that this exploration was a separate, future project, but a connection into the shops was still sought, as a significant aspect of how people make use of the streets and spaces in everyday life. The

barber's shop was chosen as potentially giving the opportunity to draw in local male voices that might not be present in some other groups, depending on how the groups developed.

The approach was undertaken through discussions with the owner who allowed me to put posters around the shop and sit within it drawing as a means to prompt openings to discuss the project. Five participants committed to taking part. There were a good number who spoke and opened up while in the shop but were not willing to participate in the actual research itself. Of the five, one went to completion of the process; on the first meeting subsequent to the shop, one withdrew, after family discussions; one undertook to carry out the photography but could not subsequently be pinned down to completing. The remaining two worked within the shop and had wanted to take part. This was the only setting where interviews were not undertaken in the home. Interviews were carried out in the shop, in the midst of potential breaks for customers. There seemed a marked difference in the extent of the interviews carried out here, with that possibility of interruption and undertaking the interviews with others listening, which may have formed limits about the extent of sharing possible.

Berridale Allotments

The fourth group drew from a characteristic practice within this part of Glasgow - working local allotments. Berridale Allotments had developed subsequent to the First World War in the 1920s and is a well-used site, with a popular autumn show. I approached the site with information leaflets for the research and spoke with gardeners on site. By word of mouth I

developed three potential participants, two of whom completed the project. Both have involvement in their own research work. These were thoughtful, long term committed gardeners in the site, again carrying a stability into the project.

The argument of my research at this point is towards a practice of research – the stability which has been given through those participants who have taken the project to completion has been instrumental in allowing that work of shaping a practice to take place. But I also carry a desire that those issues of time, language and trust can be addressed over the long term locally in exploring through this practice, subsequent to the thesis work, providing differing interruptions and creative performances. The thesis is an argument for the process. And I acknowledge the privilege that it has been to undertake this current research at depth because of the stability provided through those who completed the project. Other participants would have produced a different Field Text that would have produced a different performative interruption. But through *this* Field Text we are producing *this* performative interruption – the argument within the thesis is towards the practice model, creating varying textures through different sampling techniques, as a validated methodological work.



Figure 2.3

Preparatory work for #imaginingcommonties project 2015, textile over daffodil bulbs.

Photo © derrick I watson 2015.

2.3

Tracing the *in-between* lines constructing the mesh: validating the Research Text

'...this valley, this village and a church built with stones from the river...'

R S Thomas

(from 'The Calling' by R. S. Thomas, quoted in McGill, 2003, p. 21)

"...co-actors, mutually engaged collaborators in a fragile fiction...the performative view admits the fragile situation of the fieldworker."

(D. Conquergood & Johnson, 2013, p. 21)

The validity of the Research Text, 'the meshwork', lies in the process of development from the Field Text. Working within a performance trajectory there are guiding criteria of validity within the 'pre-performance' process. Cho & Trent gather three working criteria as a broad validating framework: data sufficiency, critical interpretation and script craftsmanship (Cho & Trent, 2009). This section will work primarily with the first two criteria. I will draw on the third criterion in 2.5 in moving towards Part 3, *Crafting Interruptions*, where I am creating a kinetic performance from this working interpretive document.

2.3.1

Validating Criterion 1 – data sufficiency

Thematic analysis is a qualitative research process undertaken to describe a 'patterned response' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82) within a Field Text. It is used across different

qualitative methodologies, developing through coding work towards themes which depict those patterned responses. Validity lies with undertaking the process and accounting for judgements and decisions made in the making of those patterns.

Here I will set out the development of one *in-between* line from the Field Text. Each *in-between* line takes shape out of a particular transcript. A patterned response is developed from initial coding, shaped through thematic mapping to a first scripted narrative. Thematic analysis is used within this section to validate the data sufficiency in making the Research Text from the Field Text. Following this particular detailed shaping of an *in-between* line, expressed through a story, I will set out a number of these scripted narratives similarly developed in the research which act as interim lines towards weaving the meshwork of the Research Text.

2.3.1.1

attentiveness to a life lived in-between

Photo- elicitation¹⁴ was used as an appropriate tool in creating the Field Text. This was first described by Collier in 1957 (Moore et al., 2008, p. 51), developed to open up responses amongst migrating farmers in Canada where difficulties had occurred in standard verbal interviews. Photography enabled an articulation of experience that had been problematic within previous attempts. This characteristic of photo-elicitation of drawing sensual and

¹⁴ Pink refers to 'photo-elicitation' as a problematic term, potentially masking the collaborative interpretive work undertaken in the process, while she values the activity (Pink, 2007, pp. 82, 84)

visceral responses to location in ways that had been difficult in verbal interview techniques is identified within the literature around recent urban research. Studies have used the practice in relation to the social situations of older men living on their own (Sorensen, 2012); drawing out understandings of the everyday lives of children (Epstein, Stevens, McKeever, & Baruchel, 2006); exploring how young people construct their social identities (Croghan, Griffin, Hunter, & Phoenix, 2008); experiences of marginalised youth around the 2012 London Olympic site (Kennelly & Watt, 2012); and encouraging working men, butchers, to speak and share on their everyday practices (Natasha, Alexander, & Jason, 2012).

Harper suggests that photo-elicitation ‘...mines deeper shafts into a different part of human consciousness than do words-alone interviews’ and does so through a strongly collaborative practice (Harper, 2002, p. 23). Van Auken identifies three primary qualities of using photo-elicitation:

...the photographs it generates provide the stimuli for “deep” interviews; it can produce different types of information than other social science techniques; and it addresses concerns about power relations between researcher and subject.

(Van Auken, Frisvoll, & Stewart, 2010, p. 374)

Within their research they extend this to suggest that it carries significant promise in engaging in local socio-spatial questions.

The value of using photo-elicitation within this project lay with opening up detailed emotional and sensual responses in a context that remained relatively unknown to me in the

early stages of ministry here. Those responses to this local site were constructed and defined through the decisions of the local participants, set within a broad framing question of photographing what mattered here in everyday life in the common spaces of Cathcart. The question of who takes the photographs which shape the interviews is a live question within the field. My decision to ask the participants to take them follows the work of Clark-Ibáñez who identifies participant-driven photographs as a better approach to collaborative engagement in everyday lives in preference to researcher-driven photos (Clark-Ibáñez, 2004).

The question of the status of the photograph/image within the process is unresolved within current visual research methodology. Rose depicts three approaches. The first two – ‘as a trace of the real’ and ‘as a culturally encoded image’ – are present across practices, but a third approach is highlighted within photo-elicitation practice. Here, she argues that photographs are working as ‘visual objects put to work to perform social identities and relations’ (Rose, 2012, p. 313). The significance of the photo lies in forming a site where the interviewer and interviewee perform their identities through working with the photographs.

Within a more detailed discussion of this in a paper analysing the relationship of visual research methods to visual culture, Rose speaks of VRM (visual research methods) as suggesting a ‘different approach to symbolic and communicative activity (Rose, 2014, p. 19). Quoting Kress, she argues that present approaches in VRM suggest that ‘what matters is what is done with an image’ distinct from approaches to intrinsic meaning (Rose, 2014, p. 21). Understanding VRM to be a performing of contemporary visual culture, with ‘provisional, unstable and fluid’ uses of image, Rose argues that

...text is a necessary requirement for framing, provisionally, the fluidity of meaning in the communicative context provided by contemporary, convergent visual culture.

(Rose, 2014, p. 21)

The *first scriptings* that are written here as narrative texts, then, are such framings of the fluidity of meaning within the interviews. As scriptings they are interim narrative constructs, validated through performative methodology criteria while yet being a work of making, through my situated research. They are *makings*, which are taking place in the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee across the doing of the photographs.

As narratives in research, however, they also stake a place within narrative methodology. I am situating these *first scriptings* within a discourse of 'imaginative ethnography' where both these narratives and the subsequently drawn dialectograms used within the kinetic installation #imaginingcommonties are understood as 'ethnographic experimentations' (Kazubowski-Houston, 2017, loc. 3214) where creative work is undertaken which is '...not limited to representation as images, texts...but leads to new spaces' (Elliott & Culhane, 2017, loc. 385). These new spaces take place where a '...combination of imagination, creativity and ethnography has the potential to deepen, complete and extend our inquiry into how people make, repair and remake the world' (Elliott & Culhane, 2017, loc. 408).

In these *first scriptings* I am participating in the 'theoretical bricolage' of narrative research identified by Andrews et. al., where there is 'no single way to do narrative research just as there is no single definition of narrative' (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2013, p.

258). But where we choose to situate ourselves in that bricolage carries implications in how we evaluate the adequacy of our narratives.

I position these *first scriptings*, written under a condition of textility, as initial correspondences to the Field Text rather than representations of lives. Within the ‘theoretical bricolage’ of narrative work this situates my approach under rhizomatic narrative structures where stories are not collected but the researcher ‘...jointly participates in their construction and creation...opening up new things to happen’ (Loots, Coppens, & Sermijn, 2013, pp. 109, 110). These are works towards a new making (Loots et al., 2013, p. 118). Elliott, describing shifts in the methods of writing and presenting ethnography, expresses this move as not ‘...writing *about* the world. but...writing *with* the world’ (Elliott, 2017, loc. 961). These narratives are not ‘the complete story’. Sermijn speaks of the writing of ethnography as performative construction (Loots et al., 2013, p. 262), acknowledging particular narratives as one of many possible entrances in the making of meaning in living

...we passed through and settled temporarily in certain parts...After our joint trip, our nomadic trails don’t die; they go further according to other lines and connections
(Sermijn, Devlieger, & Loots, 2008)

Within imaginative ethnography these multiple paths and performative narratives locate their adequacy in the commitment to the fieldwork and in the visibility of ourselves in writing. The experimental provisionality of these *first scriptings* within my own work addresses the question of ‘adequacy’ of the narrative constructions under the performative

criteria earlier identified. These coalesce with the intent in undertaking imaginative ethnographic work:

...there are multiple ways in which we might experiment – in form and content, in structure and style – while remaining committed to an ethnographic narrative, one that emerges from in-depth, collaborative, rigorous fieldwork, which aims to engage and transform

(Elliott, 2017, loc. 638)

This commitment to rigorous fieldwork in the construction of the *first scriptings* as initial correspondences to the *making of here* is shown through the data sufficiency of the narratives undertaken through this section, 2.3.1. The visibility of my situatedness in the making is set out in the following section, Critical Analysis, 2.3.2. Through the development of the installation accountability to those sharing stories in the Field Text is undertaken through the sharing and discussions on the sketched dialectograms developed within these ‘ethnographic experimentations’ and invited participation and response in the re-siting work of the kinetic performative installation - #imaginingcommonties – which arises from these experiments.

– *developing one story*

This co-witness shapes her narrative locally through Berridale Allotments. I met with Emily, after she responded to the flyers that I had issued within the allotments. I shared on the project, and she agreed to participate. She took a number of photographs depicting what mattered in some way within her everyday life in the space of Cathcart. We subsequently met

to talk through the photographs. The interview was recorded and transcribed, notes were taken on the micro-geography of the interview itself, which was undertaken within her home. I also wrote out notes on my reflections in the making of the interview.

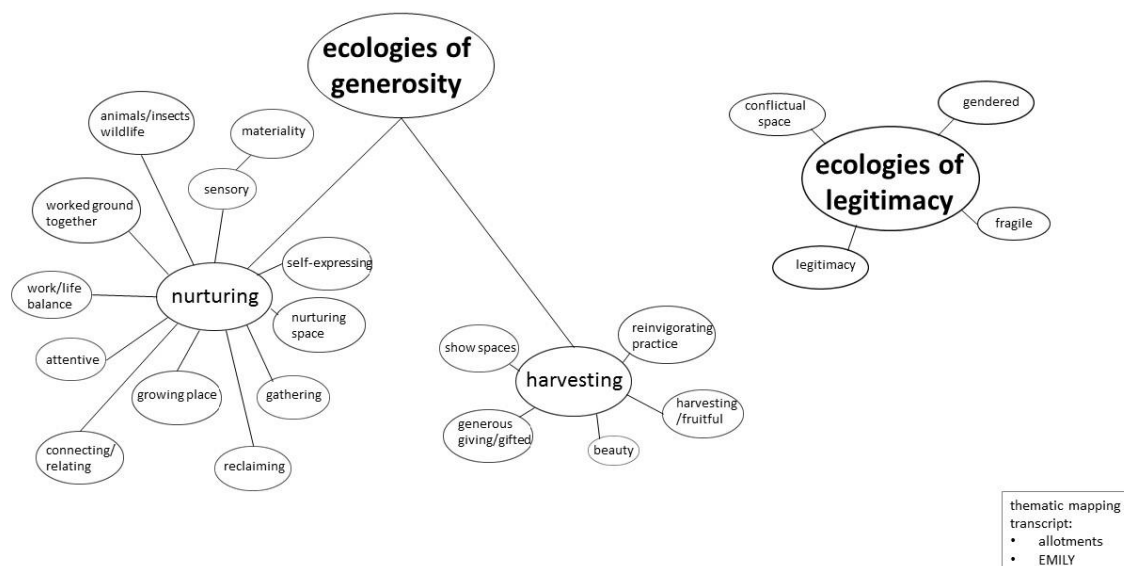
The table below is the summary coding developed for Emily's transcript.

transcript <i>group: Berridale Allotments</i> <i>co-performative witness: EMILY</i>		
DATA EXTRACT	CODED FOR:	<i>notes</i>
one of the key things about finding another place to live was that there would be an allotment close by...has become quite an important part of my life...in my...I think quite successful attempts to get a work/home life balance	1. work/life balance	
this is the place where I grow vegetables and also flowers	2. growing place	
...my approach really is to have it fairly wild and fairly naturalistic so I am not a Victorian type border girl, you know (laughs) so I have my fennel run wild...	3. self-expression place	
it always looks beautiful and we always end up taking pictures of it whether there's snow down or it's frosty or it's a bright day like the day when I took that. And it's just nice to know that, you know, it's there on the door step and if people come to visit we often do that little walk as well, you know because it's not too hard going if you've got older people over and em, you know it's just nice, the birds	4. show spaces	
...it became a sort of locked space...couples here and there and individuals started to open the tearoom and set the kettle on and blow the air horn and get people in...it's a new thing really just in the time that I have been there that's been a change	5. re-invigorating practice - gendered space?	develop a code of gendered space – tearoom/Edith's cottage?
G. epitomises the diversity (laughs) on the allotments and also some of the sort of disagreements and...conflicts that occur on the allotment ...G.'s plot is quite often packed full of wood and what people think is rubbish...and some of the other guys think that he is not a neat plot...and if you don't continue to cultivate...you have to leave	6. conflictual space	
...he doesn't have all that stuff on his plot because he wants to use it all himself...he's incredibly generous with what he gathers... And it will say at the bottom, 'Ready to pick' whatever it is 'Please help yourself'	7. generous/giving/gifted	
he gets in skips, he goes to wood yards he collects anything that people are throwing away	8. gathering	
it was just a bit of sort of rough grass, sort of wasteland with lots of litter and rubbish on it...they just threw down a lot of rubbish really...and we just thought 'let's have a go'...a few of us who were a bit more able started digging ...there's a lot of slate, a few slate pathways on the community garden as well and it's off our roof...we kept all the slate and smashed it into bits and it's made a beautiful shiny grey pathway there	9. reclaiming	
it was quite an intense thing...my partner and I and maybe three other people in digging, you know...but we were always there	10. worked ground together	

<p>...so the back two have got fruit bushes in, so every year they come up and produce fruit, so all you need to do is prune them and eat the fruit and the kids stand there with their hands through the net and just eat all the fruit and it's great to watch them little toddlers, you know...</p>	11. harvesting/fruitful	
<p>..this is in my garden, it's alliums and cornflowers and the reason I took this picture is because of all the bees o it and its one of the things that links, I suppose, all of my outdoor spaces, the wildlife. And these bees I cannot prove are from our community garden but we have two hives...</p> <p>I try to grow things that will keep the bees going...and we've got a wild flower section on the community garden now as well</p> <p>and one of the guys who's been...who was involved in trying to get a better build opposite, who's not involved in the garden but goes by and talks about the garden and comes in and has a chat, he came onto the bridge at the same time and I said 'there's a heron, there's a heron' and he gets his camera out and we're both sat there going 'I can't believe it' and he was telling me, you know, for years and years the herons have come down to that part of the White Cart and he hadn't seen them for two years and he wondered if what had been going on around, perhaps unsettled them or...but he was glad to see the heron back now, and it just linked in for me again about the importance of living here is that there are these, em, patches of green and there are gardens and there are spaces where wildlife can come and be and it just sat there for ages and ages</p>	12. animals/insects/wildlife	
<p>...so we just literally put all this wood in a big pile and there were a couple of ferns that were already growing along here and the brambles, so we just sort of trained the brambles and this rose came up and we just left that and its become this lovely (laughs) naturalistic sort of space where creatures can come and there's loads of birds here</p> <p>..and the mosaic,...that was another neighbour down on Kilmailing and she said it would be lovely if we had a little mosaic to bring colours' and we were like 'Oh my God, we don't know how to do mosaics, we're not very arty' and then she started it, she didn't complete it but other people then came and did it and before you knew it we had the mosaic, so I mean, again, it's that whole totally informal, it's evolved.</p>	13. nurturing space	
<p>We had to have some flags in because we've got a couple of disabled elderly people and they had, one of the ladies has got sticks, so she needs flat ground of a certain width so that dictated one pathway to the seat. And she came along one day and said 'I would like the seat painted, eh, facing that way, please. Which we thought was hilarious, y'know, so we did this thing just so that she could get and sit in this seat in the way that she wanted</p>	14. attentive	
<p>...the kids love to jump on the different textures, when they're two or three, they love that, so they go from area to area, they go on their little, em, trunk bits, y'know, the little wood thing that goes through the middle, they'll go on the chippings and then they'll stamp on the..., and the mother just said it to me the other day 'Ah, he just loves that, he loves standing on that texture' – who knew?</p>	15. sensory	
<p>my mum had borders in the garden, and one thing's I remember as a kid is going to the garden centre occasionally, she wasn't a big gardener, but she did do gardening, and, I mean, it's funny actually, it's probably one of the few things that we have in common that we can talk about, y'know my mum and I, are very very different people but we do talk about plants and I save seed for her and she'll give me cuttings and so there is a bit of that but no, there's not really anybody else in my family who's particularly garden. I remember when I was a kid there was, em, one of my auntie's dads, he grew aquilegias, hundreds of different types of aquilegias, and I remember going to his garden and thinking it was amazing, y'know, all these sort of bonnety flowers, and I have aquilegias in my own garden because I remembered them</p>	16. connecting/relating	
<p>we go up to Snuff Mill and up into the park that way and, eh, it's just such a lovely area, it's a conservation area down there and, eh, there's just something lovely about that bridge and the river running through</p>	17. beauty	

<p>I think it shows how fragile communities are and how fragile the open spaces and the wildlife are in particular communities – they can be attacked or spoilt, you know, so easily</p>	18. fragile	
<p>the land was originally left to the old men, it was those days (laughs), the old men of Cathcart and it was left by Edith Shoesmith...and you know, lots of people had a Note of Interest on it, obviously would like to build on it and so on, and I just thought, well, it belonged to the old men of Cathcart, there's not a lot of green space around here...I initially thought of old people living in tenements, no open space</p> <p>...my thinking was where we were on, if people wanted to use the garden...there would be no good reason for them to say 'Stop the garden!' And also, because the land was left to the old people of Cathcart really it would have to be proved that it wasn't, for us to be willing to get off</p> <p>The Council sold...the Council sold the land to the Housing Association on a nod and a wink that they would get permission to build, yeah, they then didn't get permission to build so the Housing Authority...Association tried to sue the Council. When the, em, what's it called now, some independent guy, I can't remember the name, Reporter - when the Reporter came to look he went with the no permission, they then resubmitted with some small changes and got permission.</p> <p>it used to be they built whatever, and they ignored communities, now they go through the motion of listening to communities the first time round, making tiny changes and then they do it anyway! So now it's just about building legitimacy – all they are trying to do is be legitimate, look legitimate</p>	19. legitimacy	<p>& add additional coding for materiality? texture. soil, touch, eat, pick / grounded language</p>

These codes were then thematically mapped:



I then construct a narrative which reads these mappings with an *attentiveness to dissonant lines of becoming*, a critical attentiveness which will be set out in detail, under the second validating criteria, which follows these narratives. Here I am setting out a first scripting narrative expressing *this in-between* line of Emily's life through the Cathcart site as a detailed depiction of the making of these lines in the research.

Emily's story of passion and generosity

This is a way of living, of nurturing, of growing. Not just for me but for others. For children, for people who are not thought about, for people passing by, for bees, for hedgehogs, for older people trying to climb up a hill. I am trying to live with and for and understand what is around me and who is around me and how to nurture life – how to make it better. Make it better in ways led by them and their needs. In the allotments there are two sort of patterns to developing your area – one is to have a clear idea of where you are going and buy in what you need to make it happen. The other is to find and use what is to hand, things left and passed over by others that you gather and shape your allotment with. I am more towards that last one. I gather and re-use and work with what comes to me, with what is around me. We had an old derelict piece of ground across from us and rather than let the council take what was given as common ground, we worked the ground into a garden, where anyone could come in and sit or plant or grow or harvest. Anyone could bring what they gathered and help it grow. We have bees now and hedgehog places. We have kids running across the different sounds of the garden, the slate shingle, the tree trunk stepping stones, the bark, putting their hands through the netting to reach the strawberries and the raspberries, we have mosaic makers with gathered ceramics making broken pictures; when someone with walking sticks asks can we put a path there and a seat with space for the sticks on the path, then we find a way to make this be a seat that works for her. We live like this to speak a different way, where bees can write lines

across roads. Against Council power that doesn't see the fragility of our lives together and the ecologies we live.

This is a passionate action of working ground in ways that nurture people, plants, and animals. The two distinct paths set out in allotment development become metaphors for how life is to be lived: along paths which are pre-planned, impositional and objectified; or through nurturing and growing what is to hand and what is gathered, letting the materials and the plants and people and animals find their path, make a way. And that approach bears particularly on the gifted ground of Edith's cottage – a pattern of local nurture has been undertaken and practiced as a device against the prospect of the loss of the ground to flats, a loss felt more deeply through an ongoing development a short distance away where a language of consultation, for this co-witness, belied the machinations of imposition.

Above I have traced the making of one *in-between* line of local living, expressing it through a *first scripting*, an initial correspondence to the Field Text. In what follows, I set out a series of these narratives which became a means to making the Research Text, seeing a *meshwork* constructed through these lines being walked in proximity to one another here.

2.3.1.2

a gathering of stories

Here I will write out a number of first scriptings – constructed narratives of particular *in-between* lines of living, deriving from the thematic mappings of the transcripts, and written

through reading the Field Text in distinct ways. After giving the narratives I will draw out particular lines of reading the Field Text in this way and situate those readings through my theoretical framework. This is an accounting for this particular reading, working through the first two validating criteria of data sufficiency and critical interpretation, naming *in-between* lines towards constructing the *meshwork*/Research Text which follows in 2.4.

Jonny's story of beauty and connecting

This is a beautiful place. My old flat felt like prison, but here I can get outside. I breathe in the garden, shout across to my neighbours, eat on the patio with Iraqi friends from upstairs, while neighbour's kids play badminton on the grass. I talk to the foxes that wander through and sit and watch me, and I can hear the bowlers across the hedge shouting at each other, can see them if I pull myself up off the chair, holding onto the hedge. In the corner at the door, in sunshine and out of the wind I can smoke, this is my bit, here and in the kitchen window, where I can sit and read and think and remember. I remember my wife, my family. I go into the bedroom where my wife's ashes are kept and I speak with her each night. I keep her chair in the living room, it's her chair, but my space is here in this kitchen window seat. I pull the blind down so that neighbours don't think that I am spying on them. Neighbours from my old flat in Mansewood come across and bring my shopping. When I take the wheelchair down to the wee shop I bring up papers for neighbours. We sit with each other in the front pavement and make sure the kids are safe playing in the road.

This is the everyday movement of a man in a wheelchair who moved into a new lower flat within the Ashmore Crescent development from previous flat accommodation in Mansewood. What would seem on first sight to be limited in terms of participation in the space is rich in multi-sensory lines of relations and movements. His back garden, which sits

privately behind the flat becomes a hugely rich site of connecting relations with the weather, the animals, to play and neighbours, linking both audibly and visually. The 'window event' of the kitchen corner seat becomes a site of memory, linking back and contemplating what could be. There are practices of common use across the back garden, some invited, some not, which construct a beautiful place for him.

Rab's story of walking the ground together

The field at the back – our kids grew up playing in that. At least it was called the field, big wooded area down to Clarkston Road, owned by about 3 different companies but it was never going to be built on, too many mine workings – all the kids played in it, we built treehouses and I kept a path cleared and used it to go down to the shops. I've stopped people from cutting down some of the trees in, well, it's not my field, but...And across the road in the cemetery, I remember kids playing in there when the but n'ben was derelict and I was sitting on the step in their goal and I got a mouthful – I was invading their territory! Lot of damage in there - groups from Castlemilk I think. When I came I said to my wife that's a good sign the greenhouses all have their glass – the cemetery greenhouses used to grow flowers for the local stations, and that; but there is so much broken now. But I like to walk up the hill at the cemetery, I can see across to the hills which I used to walk and camp on. I loved walking, with my wife, all over. Down at the Linn Park we used to make paths, with other walkers across to Busby, walking with neighbours, with friends, making the paths.

This works with language of common ground again – ground that is 'common' here by practice rather than in any sense 'gifted' – the Field and the cemetery areas. This understanding of the ground being owned in some sense through the common practice, epitomised in play, the playing of children, extended to successfully arguing against the cutting of trees in an area of

land that was not personally owned but had been owned commonly in the imagination for many years. Part of that common practice across land is noted also in the practice of making new paths collectively, across time on the fringes of the Linn Park.

Anna's story of an oasis in a damaged place

I am ashamed sometimes of the brutality of where we are, there are parts that make me feel very sad and angry. The weeds that cover what could be good ground, things that get left, abandoned. There's a bit at the end of our road, the house got pulled down to widen the road. The Council didn't widen the road, and it's just left – and the house next to it, abandoned 10 years ago maybe, when the family broke up – I've tried writing, nobody responds. I feel ashamed sometimes. Our school – makes me sad every time I see it, we worked so hard on it, planted a garden and put fencing in. It's all gone to waste, it was just the loveliest school. And they are just letting it rot until they have to pull it down. I've got really happy memories – some of the first people I knew here in Cathcart I met in this playground, where my children were running around. It makes me really sad. Like the shops all changing, from practical things like bakers or butchers to hair and beauty shops – how many do we need, I hate that sort of thing, where women need to artificialize themselves. The one shop that I love is the mini-market – they are so friendly, always asking about my family, they know everyone and everyone knows them. I love that. And I also love the space of my allotment, the wide open sky, it feels like the seaside sometimes with the seagulls, it's an oasis, no interruptions, you can work away in peace, you can get your hands into the ground. And our open days are so full of life and colour and people talking to each other, I'm really proud of this place, of our allotments – we began working in community gardens back in Denver. I can't imagine living without an allotment and seeing the vastness of the sky. This beauty and also this sadness or hardness – it's like when we came, this really busy junction with five roads coming in and the trains over on the bridges and it's all too noisy, too many cars and unsafe, but my husband parked our car in the rain at the top of Rhannon Road and looked around and found the old bridge, and it's just beautiful,

nothing else like it where we were looking – that clinched it. And we love bringing people to see it.

There are two very different moods here. One which is about sites of vulnerability that are deteriorating or transitioning into what are negative experiences for this co-witness, to the extent of feeling ashamed at parts of her surroundings. In contrast, the opportunity to work the land, to grow and to nurture life in her allotment in particular is full of beauty and friendship, ‘grounded’ work that gives her an oasis from what has seemed at times a brutalised local site, one that is deteriorating, where the nurturing work of the allotment allows her to feel connected to where she has come from and who she is. The garden work, for her, is expanding her life where much of the other experiences feel like a withdrawing of living, a deteriorating path, artificializing.

Calum & Ruth’s story of changes

Everything is in transition, moving, changing. I love the walk down the avenue of trees into the Linn Park, all the different seasons and colours and you see different things, and then it opens out onto the bridge, this beautiful white bridge. And people stop and talk, you can talk easier on a bridge, something about it. The river can change so quickly, it can rise three or four feet in a few hours, sometimes pouring down like thick sticky treacle and sometimes just a trickle. Here’s a picture of one of the wooden rails near the waterfall, can you see written into it, scratched ‘Nicky, RIP, Nicky’ – I was there the day it happened – summer’s day, he jumped into the water and didn’t come back up. It was shocking. Lives get changed. But I love walking the park, the big open spaces and seeing the bigness of the sky. I grew up in the highlands and the park is sort of tamed countryside but I recognise these waves in the ground from growing up –

lazybeds, ways of growing crops - in the landscape of the park. But one of the most beautiful places is the old cemetery, the lees and the alleys, there is a lot of dereliction but secluded, beautiful and everything growing. And at the right time everyone is picking brambles, just this week I've met three people picking brambles to make jelly, something that's happened just by neglect. It's funny how growing things opens up people – my front garden means a lot to me because when I am working there I talk with people as they are passing, it's probably the most time I spend sharing with neighbours, knee deep in the garden. There was an old lady across the road who used to send messages across to us saying how much she enjoyed our garden! But I love reading the stories on the gravestones, a chance to read when you are walking, I really feel the loss of children. We had to take a picture of this for you. These children died over a hundred years ago but their deaths are marked here, and cared for, small things and flowers are put into this space and replaced every few months for as long as we have been here. There's a note on the tree with the names and dates of these children who died over 120 years ago. It's interesting what people value about a person.

Almost all the pictures for this transcript came from green spaces – either the Linn Park or the old Cemetery, with one of their front garden. But what is marked through the Field Text here is the sense of transitions, that the constant walking through these spaces brings with it not a sense of stability but of change, of constant change, through the seasons marked by colours and weather and the river levels, the force of the waterfall. The sense of moving into different experiences from the streets into these breathing, growing, memory filled spaces, where transitions of life and death are also inscribed into the landscape, on wood, on stone, where memories from childhood are experienced in the landscape. And where these sites of growth and change become events of social gathering and sharing – in the front garden, or bramble collecting. The landscape of the park and the cemetery become transitional and inscribed

places of meaning that are expressing lines of memory, of sharing, of living with a sense of beauty, colour and deep wonder.

Emma's story of common loss and going out

I feel sad about what's happened in Pollokshaws. They've displaced a whole community to build houses for more affluent people, that's what I feel. They made it into an EPT area and moved a lot of problem people in and there would be crime coming out of Pollokshaws. They brought in asylum seekers and when they got asylum they didn't fill the multis again, so to me that's been the plan. When the land was gifted it was to be green space, now the planners, they make it private housing, it's too close to Hutchie's. My flat looked through the trees and across the river to the playing fields, I could see my kids playing – that land was donated to be playing space (partner, coming in – but they were under orders from others, to bring in people who had made problems in other places). But here's different, it's a beautiful place, I feel my son is safe here, a boy that he knew was murdered along from our flats, he was chased, you'll see the flowers at the river, just where it comes out. But I miss it – I feel ungrateful sitting in this lovely house, but it's emotions, your family growing up there. They played in the square of grass between the flats, on their bikes or football. And you could shout them in – we had a thing where you knew which multi to phone to get someone to shout them in. My granddaughter plays in our back garden now, here's a picture of her on her bike. But we miss it – even my neighbour here, who is Somali, says she misses it, the community, I mean that's crazy, isn't it? The walk back into Pollokshaws to pick up my granddaughter from the school, the skyline of my home is all changing, there used to be 10 multis there. The bus out from here is like a wee community, it's the one wee bus, the 374 and it's full of the same faces everyday (partner – there's more buses go up to Whitecraigs every day, know what I mean, there's only this wee bus). When I see the parents passing with their kids on the way to school, this is where the school used to be, our houses, I'm sure they're annoyed and moaning that they need to walk to the bottom of the hill. I miss Pollokshaws – when I look out our window – those trees

across the road, they look just like the trees I used to look across to the playing fields to see my children.

The lines here are pulling outwards. There is a significant sense of dispossession, a recurring use of a language of 'they' as holding power over our homes and our lives, particularly expressed through the partner who comes in during the interview and interjects at times. And the sense of injustice about gifted land, land given for common use and play that is being taken away and built on by 'them'. The lines through this site keep moving towards other places – walking towards the granddaughter's school in Pollokshaws, the shifting skyline, the bus out, and the trees across the road which place her again in her old home, with the images of her kids playing. What is undergone here is a living of loss, with feelings of injustice about those losses, a dispossession of common gifted ground, marked and remembered through her children's play. The boundedness of her own granddaughter now learning to ride her bike in the back garden rather than in the street or in the grass squares between the flats marks differing common relations between neighbours here and there. And her own sense of dispossession has made her sensitive to her own home being built as a dispossessive action upon those already here, through the loss of their school.

Rachel's story of healing walking

Most weeks I am walking up to Shawlands two or three times, I used to stay in Battlefield and a lot of what I need is still over there. I walk up through the tree-lined streets towards the church there, it's stunning. And I walk along the river, going across the bridges. I just like trees in the streets, I don't know, the colours, the changing seasons. I grew up in Aberfoyle and you can't get many more trees than that. I wait at

the bridges, feed the ducks. The walking makes me feel calm – I look at the gardens, there are a couple of sad pictures of gardens in there just because they're pretty! It's peaceful, there aren't many people around but plenty of wildlife.

The action of walking as an act of calming, of linking with memory, the paths are chosen with echoes of Aberfoyle in the trees. The desire to walk in areas which will move away from others and connect her with wildlife, with the trees, the river, point to this action of walking as a continuing remaking of herself, out of the pressures and the blood, sweat and toil of the day.

2.3.2

Validating Criterion 2 – critical analysis

The above set of first scriptings are already an expression of both of the first two validating criteria of Braun and Clarke. The first validating criterion, the data sufficiency of the narratives, lies in their demonstrably arising through the Field Text, in the coding and the thematic mappings. But as narratives they are a construction, a scripting towards a performing, a re-making. Here I speak to that constructed-ness, clarifying my theoretical framework through which the narratives have been written and which will shape the Research Text as a work of critical analysis. Madison writes of this stage 'objectivity was not

my aspiration in scripting the performance' (Madison, 2006, p. 401)¹⁵. She was writing out of three years of fieldwork in Ghana in the context of activists standing for women's rights in traditional contexts. Her ethnographic work is written in extreme conditions, where my own current research is seeking approaches within the everyday. But that extremity helps to clarify decision making and situatedness in the scripting work. She sets out an embodied participatory responding to the Field Text in making performance scripts:

You can't do ethnography without embodied attention to the symbols and practices of a lived space. In-depth interviewing is a component of ethnography, but it is not ethnography, it is qualitative research. Something happens differently when your body must move and adjust to the rhythms, structures, rules, dangers, joys, and secrets of a unique location. Ethnography is as much, or more, about bodily attention—performing in and against a circumscribed space—as it is about what is told to you in an interview.

(Madison, 2006, p. 401)

Cho and Trent, in developing their validating criteria for performance related qualitative work, set out Madison's steps in scripting those adjustments, being attentive to what is taking place and her own situatedness in it through writing the script: deciding the narratives to work with; how they are put together; and how they are grouped (Cho & Trent, 2009, p. 10). Here I set out my theoretical framework through which these decisions are undertaken on the Field Text, shaping the narratives through which the Research Text, the

¹⁵ Cho & Trent also note that performance texts "...are not simple, confessional tales of self-renewal as much as they are provocative weavings of stories with theories" (Cho & Trent, 2009, p. 3), and quoting Madison – "...it is a braiding of poetry and reportage" (Cho & Trent, 2009, p. 9)

meshwork, develops. This theoretical framework I will characterise theologically as a commitment to *dissonant lines of becoming*, within a wisdom trajectory.

2.3.2.1

committing to dissonant lines of becoming

Here I return to the conceptual tools of Ingold set out earlier in shaping my attentiveness. Structured around *in-between lines*, *meshwork* and *correspondence*, this move from Field Text to Research Text situates an attentiveness to *in-between* lines. This is attentiveness to movements through which the present articulations of the space are taking place. Theologically, I am structuring my *poietic hermeneutics* through a trajectory of wisdom, as articulated in the work of Paul Fiddes. This marks a theological positioning which understands wisdom as an address *to* the church as well as a voicing *of* the church. There is an answering in the world that the witnessing community needs to be making. But in relation to disparities in the local, the participatory commitment of Fiddes' theology needs further nuancing, which I will pursue through an interaction with the conceptual tools of Ingold. This interaction forms a commitment of wise attentiveness to *dissonant lines of becoming* which theologically situates my narrating of movement and micro-geographies as local interruptives, resourcing creative liberative acts.

the creativity of the dissonance

First then, the commitment to *dissonant lines of becoming* as a nuancing of the participatory wisdom theology of Paul Fiddes. While Fiddes takes account of dissonance in the world there is a further work needed in terms of the creativity of this dissonance. I will set this out through exploring different readings undertaken by Ingold and Fiddes on the Matisse painting *The Dance*. I will then take those differences into a reading of a concluding image of Fiddes in *Seeing the World and Knowing God* (Fiddes, 2013), his fullest and most recent account of practising wisdom through a participatory doctrine of the Trinity.

On the cover of Fiddes' first major published writing on the doctrine of God, *Participating in God: a Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity* (Fiddes, 2000), is the painting *Dance* (1909), by Henri Matisse. While the painting itself is not specifically referred to within the book the language of dance appears in relation to the Trinity. The Trinity is understood as a 'perichoresis of movements', where the divine dance is about '...the patterns of the dance itself, an interweaving of ecstatic movements', and we are invited to participate in those movements (Fiddes, 2000, pp. 74, 79). In personal correspondence, Fiddes shares the intent behind the choice of the painting on the cover:

...I did not intend the painting to be read as an image of the Trinity – there are after all 5 dancers – but to be a picture of *us participating* in God. *We are the dancers*, moving in the communion of God's life, sharing in the relational flow of the divine dance. The picture captures something of the joy, the ecstasy, the sheer dynamism of this participation. The motif of the dance runs throughout the book...." [Unpublished

Lecture, 'Participating in God', given at William Jewell College, Liberty, Missouri, April 2001.]¹⁶

The call is to become attuned to those movements, to participate and move in them.

Ingold also uses the same painting by Matisse. But he uses it differently. This is a nuanced difference but it bears fruit in the interpretation and use of a closing image in Fiddes' later book on wisdom. Ingold uses Matisse's *Dance* to speak of the sociality of the dancers, the way in which they link and entwine through the lines of their hands and the movements of their bodies. He writes of the hands in the painting as the 'instruments of sociality' (Ingold, 2015, loc.251) – but this life, this dancing, this sociality is taking place through the tension and friction (Ingold, 2015, loc.268) of the lines of movement occurring through the fingers, the hands and legs. There is a distinction in the use of the painting between Fiddes and Ingold. In part that is to be explained in the different intent behind the use. For Fiddes it is providing an image of our participating in the event and relations of God, a way of thinking about that participation as the sharing in the movement of a dance. For Ingold it is about exploring the sociality of lives being lived together. But the distinction bears upon how Fiddes interprets a later image that intends to express how we think about living wisely here, with one another, under this model of Trinitarian participation.

¹⁶ Personal email correspondence between the author and Paul Fiddes, October 2015.

The use of the Matisse painting, for Fiddes, expresses the joy and ecstasy and dynamism of participating in the movements of the Trinity. Within his later writing he is exploring a trajectory of wisdom within this participatory model. In *Seeing the World and Knowing God* (Fiddes, 2013) he uses a very different image in the penultimate and concluding paragraphs of the *coda* to the book. As such it is a culminating image that seeks to express, in the context of Trinitarian participation, significant aspects of what it means to pursue practices of wisdom here. Fiddes refers to a piece of music which had just been premiered by Jörg Widmann. An '*Attempt at a Fugue*' is part of a cycle of five string quartets by Widmann. Fiddes refers to two key aspects of the work that echo the development of these wisdom practices. First the work is embodied. The physicality of making the music becomes part of the sound, with the materials of the instruments and the breath of the musicians being explicitly expressed in the event of making. Second, the sounds, the patterns of the music are broken, dissonant.

Fiddes expresses the force of these in depicting the pursuit of wisdom

...the composer explains that in our world today, only an attempt at a fugue is possible. Yet one commentator concludes: 'the fugue has failed so that the piece may succeed'.
(Fiddes, 2013, p. 396)

The culminating expression of participating in wisdom and living wisely is not being set out in a visuality of embodiment and a picturing of joyful and ecstatic involvement in a dance – it has moved to a physicality, a movement in air, (abstract) lines in movement in the air in which we are sharing, lines of movement that are occurring through physicality, are

marked by dissonance and which are authentic in the inability to capture the lines - they continually escape, but we are still able to live in the midst of the sound, share in that line of broken, embodied sound. That is the image that Fiddes uses to conclude his work on developing a practised theology of wisdom.

But this is where Fiddes' use of the image needs to be pushed further. The cycle of five string quartets by Widmann was performed live in 2013 for the first time and a short documentary was made on the creative process through which the pieces, including *'Attempt at a Fugue'* arose. Through the documentary format and the interview with Widmann, along with the musicians, the physicality of the production of the music is very visible. What is also clear is the creative force of the experienced dissonances in forming the cycle, in making this new beginning:

I wrote a great many beginnings all of which struck me as not right, as dishonest, as it was something I could simply not assert. So I tried to take the pressure which I felt weighing on me and make it part of the music: this is exactly the pressure with which the First Quartet begins.

(Betzl, 2013)

He is only able to express the feeling of this in the documentary through his body & making sounds not words, to express the beginnings of this dissonant, embodied re-making of a string quartet. The value of this excursion into the making of the piece of music that Fiddes uses as a culminating image of the practice of wisdom here, lies in this work of re-

making. Fiddes is able to draw embodiment and dissonance into his participatory model of wisdom,

...if we are to use the image of 'attunement' for a Christian wisdom-theology in this late-modern context, I suggest that we have to qualify it by late-modern perceptions about the music from which the metaphor is drawn, which are in the end insights into human experience generally. We will have to take account of the actuality of the body and its passions, together with the reality of what must remain unharmonized. Indeed, the two aspects belong together. It is because human life is embodied that dissonance is bound to arise; taking the body seriously means that its chaotic elements have to be accepted and even welcomed.

(Fiddes, 2013, p. 380)

The issue here is that dissonance is being included because it arises in the work of the body. But to return to the narrative around the production of *'Attempt at a Fugue'*, dissonance lay at the heart of the work of making – dissonance was not drawn in to complete the sound, to 'make the piece succeed'. It is the line through which the creative process is undergone, through which the making is taking place.

a de-stabilizing hegemonic practice

Fiddes develops two strands to his theology of wisdom, his stated intention (Fiddes, 2013, p. 22). The first strand is an attentiveness to pattern,

From this observation of the world, sometimes in the face of extreme adversity, the wise find patterns of meaning and detect regularities

(Fiddes, 2013, p. 9)

...hokmah includes an 'evidence-based' approach, organizing observations into patterns

(Fiddes, 2013, p. 393)

But what is also present in this attentiveness is an awareness of the complexity of the world and the fragility of words to hold it (Fiddes, 2013, p. 144). That humility of the person before the world, in that complexity and fragility, raises a central issue in Fiddes' work. Through *Seeing the World* Fiddes is arguing against understandings of a 'totalizing subject', whether that is God as subject or ourselves as subjects (Fiddes, 2013, p. 95). The second strand to his theology of wisdom uses participatory language against a language of mediation. Using depictions of wisdom in three Hebrew poems he argues for practices of wisdom as invitational into enjoyment of the 'manifold phenomenon amongst which [we] live', participating in the flow of movement of God, in our particularity of this moment (Fiddes, 2013, p. 211), against mediation language which seeks to control access and can validate oppression (Fiddes, 2013, p. 205). The work of entangled reflexivity in 1.3 is shaped in this understanding.

Within Fiddes' Trinitarian model, this attentive participation is depicted as a participation in two directions of movement, of sending and responding, the relations of Father and Son. But our participation occurs in the interweaving of a third movement, of the Spirit, which he describes in particular ways

...they (relations of sending and responding) are continually opened up to new depths of relationship and to the new possibilities of the future by a movement for which

scripture offers impressionistic images – a wind blowing, breath stirring, wings beating, oil trickling, water flowing, fire burning.

(Fiddes, 2013, p. 153)

Our attentive participation in the actions of God is being expressed in these images of movement. But this is not a simple participation. In a context of complexity and fragility in the world, the humility of the person within that context, and against actions of a totalizing subject, Fiddes develops a particular strand in thinking through *practices* of wisdom, in relation to Michel de Certeau. In the embodied practice of wisdom in the world, attentiveness to patterns also brings an attentiveness to dissonant patterning and the development of tactics against totalizing patterns, remaking spaces through attentive narrative, working with a ‘hidden poesis’ (Fiddes, 2013, p. 326), writing and rewriting everyday practice.

These aspects of attentive participation in movements of God through the Spirit being depicted in impressionistic images, drawing narrative of everyday living to make tactical re-narrations of places as a development of wisdom practices supports my interpretation of Fiddes as requiring to read the concluding Widmann reference ‘*Attempt at a Fugue*’ under a creative mode. Here the dissonance experienced by the composer becomes the line of creativity for the making of this embodied, dissonant piece, a tactical work against the ‘totalizing structure’ of the quartet, provoking an interruption to *what is*.

Fiddes treads an immanent¹⁷ path within his reading of practices of wisdom, in his participatory theology which opens towards the conceptual tools of Tim Ingold, bearing fruit here in linking this creative mode of wisdom to Ingold's work on *in-between* lines as a participating *here* in movements of sociality. In the practice of wisdom *here*, the reading of Ingold on Matisse's painting *Dance* is more aligned with this creative mode of reading Fiddes' concluding image of the Widmann String Quartet than the analogy earlier undertaken by Fiddes in expressing our participation in Trinitarian relations. A practice of wisdom, embodied attentiveness in a complex world held with fragility and in humility, while yet seeking dissonant patterning against totalizing structures – I am aligning this kind of practice with the attentiveness to frictions and tensions in the lines of movement and life that Ingold depicts as *in-between*, and which construct his *meshworks*.

2.3.2.2

following the materials: entanglements in local textilities

In taking this forward I am developing practices which are being born in the paradigm change that Fiddes calls for, moving from a narrative of mediation to one of participation (Fiddes, 2013, p. 210). Fiddes speaks of '...using vision to enable others to flourish (Fiddes, 2013, p. 174) and through his work on Hebrew wisdom he argues against that seeing as a dominating

¹⁷ For an assessment on immanent/transcendent language in Fiddes see my *Literature Review* within the Portfolio, particularly on his essay *The Quest for a place which is 'not-a-place': the hiddenness of God and the presence of God*, (Fiddes, 2002)

gaze, through this paradigm shift to a participatory mode of seeing (Fiddes, 2013, p. 211) and a commitment to a haptic, immersive, whole body 'seeing' (Fiddes, 2013, p. 212). Tim Ingold uses a description from the visual theorist James Elkin, to set out a similar commitment to participatory seeing:

A historian, trained with books and colour slides, will stand at a respectful distance and look without moving. An artist, at home with gestures, will want to move a hand over the drawing, repeating the gentleness of the marks that made it, reliving the drag of the brush or the push of the pencil. The drawing has *become* its bodily response, and the body moves...to what it senses on the page.

(Elkins, quoted in Ingold, 2011a, p. 223)

Ingold speaks of a redrawing of anthropology (Ingold, 2011a, p. 221), similar to Fiddes' paradigm shift to participatory wisdom, in terms of seeking lines of becoming – movement, histories of becoming, ethnographic encounters that see, that are attentive to the lines of life, the becoming of material trajectories of living (Ingold, 2011a, p. 221). There is an attentiveness to threads and traces of lines of movement and growth, looking for creative, improvising entanglements (Ingold, 2010c, p. 10) and wandering tactical (de Certeau) patterns of lines which move through dominating structures (Ingold, 2007, p. 102). This is also, for Ingold, a question of wisdom – exploring lines which 'improvise a passage', lines which are 'laid down in movement', exploring lines through which things are becoming (Ingold, 2012, p. 49), as a work of 'togethering' (Ingold, 2011a, p. 221)

...the entwining of these ever-extending trajectories comprise the texture of the world...our task is to *follow what is going on*, tracing the multiple trails of becoming (Ingold, 2011a, p. 14)

This textured exploration is depicted in everyday living, as a participatory togetherness towards creative becoming

As the life of inhabitants overflows into gardens and streets, fields and forests, so the world pours into the building, giving rise to characteristic echoes of reverberation and patterns of light and shade. It is in these flows and counter-flows, winding through or amidst without beginning or end, and not as connected entities bounded either from within or without, that living beings are instantiated in the world.

(Ingold, 2011a, p. 85)

This entanglement in local textilities is marked within a wisdom trajectory in particular ways. To return to Fiddes' participatory lines of wisdom, he sets out that what persists between the Hebrew wisdom literature and participating in Trinitarian relations lies in movements of love, creativity and justice (Fiddes, 2013, p. 212). Attending to these in local dissonant *in-between* lines shapes a situated poietics of local making. This has constructed the first scriptings of the Field Text which now weave a Research Text, a *meshwork*, preparing the way for the kinetic performative work of Part 3.



Figures 2.4, 2.5, 2.6

Participant photos from gathering work, #imaginingcommonties project 2015.

Used with permissions.

2.4

A Meshwork: Making ‘the Research Text’

Three emerging themes were constructed through the theoretical framework on the Field Text. I am defining these themes as my Research Text, a local *meshwork*. These themes are (1) a contrastive ‘places of the soil/soiled places’; (2) ‘transitions’; (3) ‘informal owning and a return to the commons’.

2.4.1

Theme 1 - places of the soil/soiled places



Figure 2.4

See note p110, used with permission.

I have linked these together because they occur consistently within the same narrative lines of interviews – attentiveness to ‘growing ecologies’ also brought a sensitivity to vulnerable and damaged sites. ‘Places of the soil’ as a theme emerged out of narratives around allotments, gardens and daffodils, with local nurturing and harvesting ecologies.

‘places of the soil’

Within the narratives, decisions towards growing and the soil occur as ways to live better and as sites of self-expression. One of the ‘co-performative witnesses’ (Donker, 2007, p. 822) shared on the interrelations of the ground, how they lived and who they were:

one of the key things about finding another place to live was that there would be an allotment quite close by where I could go because...growing my own vegetables and being involved in an allotment association has become quite an important part of my life and particularly in my...I think quite successful attempts to get a work/home life balance you know and so this is the place where I grow...vegetables and also flowers and...at this time of year (smile/laugh) it looks great and I have a,...there are different styles of...tending your allotment...and my approach really is to have it fairly wild and fairly naturalistic so I am not a Victorian type border girl, you know (laugh) so I have my fennel run wild and I have bushes of flowers popping up amongst the spinach and all kinds of things like that

[transcript: *Emily*, Allotments]

Connecting into wider ecologies and seeing 'places of the soil' as occasions of meeting and sharing were expressed a number of times.

OK, the first photograph is my front garden, I know you're more interested in out of the garden but I took it because, firstly the garden means a lot to me, but secondly because...when I'm out there working on the garden it's a place where the community passes all the time and I have more conversations when I'm knee deep in the garden with my neighbours because it's probably the longest time I'm out in the street and you see all life passing, and people talk to you about the garden and they talk about other things too, so I thought that that was a significant place because it gave me a, you know, a place to link with people.

[transcript: *Ruth*, Dogwalking]

And within another narrative, the simple action of putting out hanging baskets of flowers makes those who pass smile

And it means a lot to me because I go down for the papers every morning for a few of the neighbours and because of the plants and the flowers that are hanging out it always gives me a smile in the morning

[transcript: *Sarah*, Dogwalking]

These connecting narratives across 'places of the soil' extend across garden areas, growing and gathering fruit and vegetables together, river bridges as gathering points to share and talk but also extend to wider ecologies of other animals. Within the housebound setting of Ashmore Crescent the back garden becomes a sharing with the lives of foxes:

Oh, yeah, all ma birds and ma foxes, they come – oh they come and feed, the foxes do...I just feed them wi'...J. brings me up lamb bones, anything like that in packets, and I open one every night and give it to the foxes [dlw – and you get to watch them] oh yes, they come and sit and look at me if their foods not out, there's two o' them – they sit on the lawn and they look at me, tell me it's time tae get fed. But the minute you open the door they're gone, but the minute you put the food out they're back. So you just close the door and let them. And then they don't eat out there, they take it away with them...[dlw – back to their foxhole?] wherever that is, there's a hole below the fence there...

[transcript: *Jonny*, Ashmore Crescent]

And those wider ecologies of being with are consciously pursued in other narratives:

these are our outdoor spaces, and this is in my garden, it's alliums and cornflowers and the reason I took this picture is because of all the bees on it and it's one of the things that links, I suppose, all of my outdoor spaces, the wildlife. And these bees I cannot prove are from our community garden but we have two hives on the community garden now. A guy on the plots, on the allotment did a bee course, wanted

to get a hive and couldn't find anywhere to, to site it. And when he heard we were doing the community garden he asked if he might site his bees there, so we just said, yeah, we'll have a go.

I try to grow things that will keep the bees going and...that is important to me, the sort of wildlife, the connections between all the different things I suppose that live on the planet, y'know, we can't live without them and so the least we can do is provide them some flowers to...to sit on (laughs) and yes, so there's bees all over, I mean there are bees in this garden, and there are bees in the community garden and we've got a wild flower section on the community garden now...

[transcript: *Emily*, Allotments]

'Places of the soil' are spoken of in terms of nurturing and growing lives and being with others – neighbours, those passing, strangers, foxes, bees, hedgehogs, slugs – sites where the language is expansive, imaginative and supportive of sharing, of growing, of a sense of living in a bigger way. Two participants referred to the largeness of the sky in these sites:

but you also just feel like you kind of...like a big extension of your own back garden in a way and you do know people there, people will always stop and talk to you and em, it's always quiet, and you get this huge view of the sky and it's what I like about it, you just look up and you see so much of the sky, the vastness of it, you know, there's no interruptions

[transcript: *Anna*, Allotments]

I would like to add another significant space...the sky...parallel with open space...affects our perception of the land, it seemed a shame not to include it

[late note on photograph of the cemetery, added to transcript: *Calum*, Dogwalking]

Linn Park and Old Cathcart Cemetery carry moments of imaginative freedom and beautiful mystery, places of release, away from authority. Within my own notes around the interviews, I refer in one from 4th October 2013, to the joy of the person when she is describing the sense of the largeness of the sky from within her allotment.

I am gathering narratives linked to the soil, the ground of Cathcart, which carry these qualities of nurture, growing, sharing in different ecologies, expansive lives which work land in ways that provide with and for others under the term 'places of the soil'. The community garden is the epitome of 'places of the soil' where the work across this piece of ground nurtures relations of generosity amongst strangers, a place to grow along with others, of growing and giving away fruit, of harvesting in ways to allow new growth for others next year, aware of your ecology of living alongside and with the life lines of others, of bees, of foxes. Alongside those nurturing ecologies lay narratives of what I am naming 'soiled places'.

'soiled places'

The shifting dynamic around places of the soil/soiled places finds a series of expressions in narratives around what is now a derelict primary school within Cathcart – Holmlea Primary School. The school closed in June 2005, with pupils moving to a new school in the Merrylee estate. Across the ten years since its closure it has fallen into serious disrepair and significant feelings of hurt were expressed at the condition of the building. Some of that hurt was expressed in memories of daffodils on the site. Prior to its closure the school had won the Glasgow Rosebowl competition in 2000. One of the 'co-performative witnesses' had

photographed an outdoor shed in the playground which still referred to the Rosebowl within a mural on the wall. The Rosebowl is awarded for green awareness within the school. Narratives spoke of a garden being constructed by parents and children. And one narrative detailed the introduction of daffodils into the playground:

one of the headmistresses, instead of...I think she was leaving, and said I don't want to give the children a sweetie or anything like that and she bought big bags of daffodils and gave a daffodil to every child to plant at the front of the school looking onto...[dlw – where is it? looking onto...] yes, we have a picture of it, so that people going past and people on the buses could look in, and as I say, they got letters from people to say how a smile comes to their face when they pass the school, especially when the daffodils are out

[transcript: *Andrew & Sarah*, Dogwalking]

These narratives of 'places of the soil' within the school setting then open the way for depictions of the desolation of the school now in the language of weeds and the sadness evoked

Holmlea School, makes me cry every time I see it, pretty much.

[transcript: *Anna*, Allotments]

look at the state of it now – it's a disgrace – we'll show you quite a few, every angle of it [Sarah - Holmlea School] That's different, from the playground, windows boarded up, weeds growing everywhere, em, different angle, boys & girls playground...

[transcript: *Andrew & Sarah*, Dogwalking]

The language of weeds is used to refer also to an overgrown area and adjoining housing at the end of a terrace, initially demolished for a road widening scheme that didn't proceed, and living with this ongoing sore in their street, with no clear way to resolve. It is used again within another transcript to share on the deterioration of a stables block within the park that had been a vibrant setting while children were growing up. 'Soiled places' speaks to experiences of areas of land which are difficult, problematic. The old cemetery moves between the two categories – at times beautiful and giving while also scarred by stones destroyed and broken; Pollokshaws, one of the locations where people were moved from to the new Ashmore Crescent development is being described in terms of what is lost, of abandonment and emptying. The streetscape of Clarkston Road is spoken of with a sense of loss, of what is missing. Again in personal notes from October 2013, in the midst of interviews I note key moments within an interview when feelings of loss are being shared around the abandonment of the street. In the narratives around leaving Pollokshaws there is language around 'they' & 'we' where there is a sense of powerlessness to the experience of being displaced.

This first emerging theme sits in the dynamic of 'places of the soil'/'soiled places' where the image of the daffodil became a significant dual signifier for me, holding both the nurturing ecology of the first, while marking loss and memory in difficult local sites.

2.4.2

Theme 2 – transitions



Figure 2.5

See note p110, used with permission.

This emerging theme picks up on three areas in the narratives: writings on life & death; landscape & remembering; walked land.

writings on life & death

Experiences of death are written into the landscape in the transcripts, both literal and figuratively. The cemetery as a place of walking carries in its headstones and memorials some of these writings explicitly, with the deaths of children particularly noticed. But a particular remembering, a caring for lost children is marked through a small fenced off memorial that someone unknown tends, with children's toys for a group of young people who died in the 1880s & 90s

Now who attends to this grave? You know, 120 years after these babies died? And it's...[dlw – has it been put there recently?] All those, the years that we've been here, this has been restored every few months...it's just incredible that...I mean who would imagine that people now are attending the grave of babies that died 120 years ago?

[transcript: *Calum & Ruth*, Dogwalking]

But the writing of death into the landscape is also a contemporary experience – the death of a boy, after sliding down a steep incline into the Cart is marked by fencing and the recent death of a young man caught up in the Linn waterfall is inscribed into the wood of a nearby fence

and people spend a lot of time there, it's a very...significant place for people, but this, which you maybe can't read, says 'Nicky, RIP Nicky', I think it says... 'Never a day passes when you're [not?] in my thoughts, from Chrissy B.' And to the other side there's a seat with a memorial to this boy Nicky who was, I think he was about 22, now I was there the day that he drowned, I didn't see it happen but it was only a few minutes after I had been there and it was a wonderful family weekend, it was a May weekend and I think there must have been two or three families down there and they were jumping off the rocks into this pool...it was quite shallow, it's not always shallow but it was relatively shallow and he didn't come up and since then this has been, become quite a monument, for ages there were football strips and flowers and stuff and all that has gone but they've got this plaque on the bench and people write on the fence

[transcript: *Calum & Ruth*, Dogwalking]

Similarly there is a more violent death inscribed in a line that is traced from Pollokshaws to a new setting in Ashmore Crescent

In fact there was a murder, just at the end of this road, just before I left, actually, from the building I was in, there was a boy chased, but everybody's dead now, the perpetrators of the murder's dead as well, committed suicide and the boy was 17 and you'll still see the flowers just at the river where it comes out, 'cause there's a wee shortcut through

[transcript: *Emma*, Ashmore Crescent]

But the language of life and death also extends to the feelings about living here – skylines disappearing, dying/neglected spaces, Clarkston Road shops signalling a dying community, Holmlea School as a wasted place. One transcript expresses a fragility to the life of the community

...and I think it shows how fragile communities are and how fragile the open spaces and the wildlife are in particular communities – they can be attacked or spoilt, you know, so easily,

[transcript: *Emily*, Allotments]

This visible everyday transitional quality to people's lives here, of living amongst inscribed experiences of life and death and a fragility to the qualities of flourishing experiences is extended into lines in the landscape that bring memories, points of remembering – genealogies of experiences and meaning.

landscape & remembering

Towards the end of the interview with one of my 'co-performative witnesses', as we stood up to finish, she looked out the window of her new home at a large group of trees in the garden across the road and said 'these are like the trees I used to see along the river from my flat window – I feel uplifted when I look at them' [transcript: *Emma*, Ashmore Crescent]

In another interview, the trees on daily walks, in all their colours, connect back to growing up in Aberfoyle amongst the trees and evoke a calmness. Snuff Mill Bridge is not only

an immediate moment but the meaning of it is linked with the first memories of being *here* and why *here* was chosen

I had mixed feelings about the area and we parked the car up on Rhannon Road at the top where this lane comes out by the bridge. And I stayed in the car because we had two young children in the car, might have been raining, anyways he said I just want to see what's down this lane. And he walked down this lane and he took a look at this bridge and the setting and he came back and he just thought this is fantastic, this is...you should see how beautiful it is down there

[transcript: *Anna*, Allotments]

The train station is not simply the place to leave from but is a remembering of school and kids

I can see my allotments from there - when my children were in primary school they went to Holmlea which you can also see from there and I used to have a different job then, where I actually took the train to work in the morning and so I could drop them off and then watch them from the playground up in the school yard before the bell rang, running around playing with their friends which is very sweet.

[transcript: *Anna*, Allotments]

The act of gardening is remembered as a sharing work with her mum in one transcript; Linn Park is a way of remembering growing up in the highlands and marks in the land are recognised as 'lazy beds' through those memories. A sledging hill in the Park is remembered through their kids. The actions of children playing in the street/landscape are repeating expressions. Within an internal corner of a kitchen, the personal domain becomes a place to remember 'what could have been and what's not possible' [transcript: *Jonny*, Ashmore

Crescent]. The transitional and fragile experiences of the articulation of these local spaces are marked by genealogies of lines lived to this point.

walked land

But the present articulations are also marked by walking as an act of 'being with'. While there are individual walkers, there is a consistent presence of references to walking with others as a way to make new meanings for this moment. One expression of this comes in the description of a path being worn from the iron bridge in the Linn Park across to Busby through the footsteps of friends and neighbours repeatedly walking the line

Aye, you can go up there and keep going til you reach Busby. [dlw- Busby? right along the river?] Aye [dlw – and you've done that quite a few times?] Oh aye, right up past the back end of Clarkston...it's a pleasant walk [dlw – so you'd go along this walk right the way down to Busby and then come back up, you and your wife?] Aye, and ma neighbours...aye we used to quite often take the dog and off...it was a wild path, just walkers had trodden on before, forced their own way through.

[transcript: *Rab*, Cathcart Barbers]

Walking becomes a means to be with others, with family on special days, with visitors; a walking group annotates the presence and paths of otters, badgers, wildlife along the Cart, excited when the heron returns. A walk through the lime tree avenue into the Park becomes a transitional move to another kind of space, a release.

This second emerging theme marks a landscape that is walked on, inscribed and written with feelings of loss and hope, life and death, carrying genealogies of memories and experiences which continue to be shaped with one another in acts of walking.

2.4.3

Theme 3 - informal owning & a return to the commons



Figure 2.6

See note p110, used with permission.

This theme arose in practices undertaken across land which was not owned by those undertaking the activities. I draw this through three areas in the narratives: Edith's garden; 'The Field'; and 'brambles'.

Edith's garden

This garden was set up in 2012 on a site off Old Castle Road. The land was originally gifted by Edith Shoesmith, the wife of a local businessman, to 'the old men of Cathcart' to thank them for their work. A house, called Edith's Cottage, was built on the land in 1935 as a place to socialise. About 2004 the site was cleared by the council after deterioration of the building. It was used as a storage area during work on flood defences to the White Cart River which runs

along the edge of the land. Subsequently it became overgrown and a number of Notices of Interest were put to the council to build. A housing association were already in dispute with residents over the nature, size and loss of greenspace on a site just up from this location. The decision was taken by one of my co-performative witnesses to take the gift of land to the 'old men of Cathcart' seriously and begin to garden it for the wider community. They started digging and others began to link together in a very informal and self-sustaining way to take the work forward. A grant was given by the Council under their 'Stalled Space' scheme. Those involved intend to resist any moves towards land redevelopment through the continuing use of the garden. The site is known as Old Cathcart Community Garden. I am using the term 'Edith's garden' as a way of situating, for my own work, the 'informal owning' of the site.

The garden is constructed on the basis of a gift. But it takes place as a way to speak of a different relationship to the land under local conditions.

This was a piece of land..., it's opposite our house and it was basically a wasteland, it had had Edith Cottage it was called, it was like, I would say it was like a working men's club almost, it was just a little cottage where older men generally went to meet...it was just a bit of sort of rough grass, sort of wasteland with lots of litter and rubbish on it as you can imagine, and when the Council were doing their anti-flooding works on the White Cart, they used that area to bring plant in to do whatever they were doing on the river banks and when they put it back to how it was they just threw down a lot of rubbish really, rocks, glass, metal, everything you could think of, just sacks of it just on the floor to level it all out and then they just threw down a bit of grass, so it was mainly couch grass and weeds and as I say the kids used to just throw their rubbish in there as they passed because it was an unkempt space...

...and I just thought, well, it belonged to the old men of Cathcart, there's not a lot of green space around here outside of the park especially when the build on Manse Brae is going to come along so it would be nice to have a place and I was particularly thinking when I initially thought about the idea...of old people, lots of old people living in tenements, no open space, sometimes a bit of anxiety about going up to the park, or in fact the physicality of getting up to the park, you know it's quite a pull up that hill, so I wondered if that might be an idea,

it could be controversial because the stalled space initiative is initially for a three year thing but my thinking was where we were on, if people wanted to use the garden, and the garden became a good community resource, there would be no good reason for them to say 'Stop the garden'. And also, because the land was left to the old people of Cathcart really it would have to be proved that it wasn't for us to be willing to get off, d'you know what I mean, we're on it now, you know, and everyone uses it, it is busy, we're amazed how many people use it

[transcript: *Emily*, Allotments]

The instrument used to prompt the common garden lies in the original giftedness of the land but there is an intent that this new use works towards an act of flourishing together, taking what is damaged and neglected, a wasteland, and working this gifted land to become a strengthening place for each other, where this flourishing stands against plans to remove the gift. Within another co-performative witness's transcript there is also reference to the feelings about gifted land being taken – speaking of her displacement from Pollokshaws she refers to gifted green space, playing fields and the school being privatised, in local narratives, towards housing for Hutcheson's Grammar School, a high-fee paying Glasgow school

but to me the plan has always been that , that I do think, as far as I was aware being in the area, like Sir John Stirling Maxwell had donated you know the school and the playing field and the area round about there to be a green space but I think the town planners now are planning just to build, you know like semis or whatever on that and it is right beside, you'll see, I've taken a photograph right beside Pollokshaws railway station, eh, so it's one stop away from Hutchie and I just think they will build

Aye, you could see across, I mean I was a top flat, so I could sort of see through anyway so that's like the river, the Burgh Halls, you were looking over that playing field towards the Burgh Halls and the primary school but that part of the Burgh Halls and the primary school and that playing field as far as I was aware wasn't meant to be built on, 'cause it was donated

[transcript: *Emma*, Ashmore Crescent]

These are local disputes about who gifted land is to or for. The community garden has intentionally structured a generous space through that gift that opens towards participation and provides food for any who pass through it:

so the back two have got fruit bushes in, so every year they come up and produce fruit, so all you need to do is prune them and eat the fruit and the kids stand there, with their hands through the net and just eat all the fruit and it's great to watch them little toddlers, y'know, and then this third one has got rhubarb at the end which has been massively popular, in fact the rhubarb is so popular people come and say 'The veg. shop have sent us down cause they say you grow rhubarb and they don't have any in',

and I'll harvest if there's loads of courgettes or there's masses of rhubarb and put it all in a trug and stick it on the gate with a sign saying 'Rhubarb, please help yourself' and people'll get it as they come off the train to go home from work, only if there's a glut, generally though the approach is go in and help yourself and initially people were really shy to take vegetables, even people who gardened, and done lots of hard work, but people are getting used to the fact that's it's alright, no one is going to come out and go 'What are you doing' (laughs)

[transcript: *Emily*, Allotments]

And this generosity takes seriously the commonality of the giftedness. In the continuing designing of the garden, it takes shape through those who are using it at any particular time, sensitive to conditions and needs

we've now got some of it on the community garden in different spots 'cause the kids, y'see again, we never imagined this, this wasn't some clever thought somebody had – what can we put on the ground rather than chippings, chippings, chippings? Let's put a bit of slate down. We had to have some flags in because we've got a couple of disabled elderly people and they had, one of the ladies has got sticks, so she needs flat ground of a certain width so that dictated one pathway to the seat. And she came along one day and said 'I would like the seat painted, eh, facing that way, please. Which we thought was hilarious, y'know, so we did this thing just so that she could get and sit in this seat in the way that she wanted, and so we got some flagstones, but we've got these roof tiles and the kids love to jump on the different textures, when they're two or three, they love that...

[transcript: *Emily*, Allotments]

This extends to the plantings, the materials, the layout, a mosaic across the back wall, the awareness that this is gifted land is significant in the practices undertaken across the soil. At a smaller scale there are references to other similar local practices.

‘The Field’

This occurs within one of the transcripts, describing a piece of land stretching from the rear of a housing development from the 1950s¹⁸ down to the main street, Clarkston Road, and bounded by the road to the Old Cemetery

They call that the field, and it used to go all the way down to Clarkston Road but in recent years they’ve built some flats down the very bottom but I don’t think they’ll build on the land out there because it’s pretty rough terrain...But all the local kids here had a lot of adventures down there, it was a smashing place, a safe place for kids to play [dlw – and it feels different now does it?] it does, but thankfully they’ve not built on it, and I’ve stopped a few people from cutting my, it’s not my trees, but my outlook trees, stopped them cutting them down. [dlw - And have the trees always been there?] Aye, they’ve always been there, they’re all wild, they belong to Mctaggart & Mickel and Education Dept. [dlw – why the Education Dept.?] They own part of the land [dlw – do you know why that is?] I don’t – it used to belong to three outfits, I don’t know who the third one was but it’s been like that since I moved in. I don’t think they’ll ever build on it. Down the bottom, where the new flats are, there are mineshafts, there used to be a small burn...

...the kids used to play down my back, and head off into the field. [dlw – and did they build things out there?] Aye, treehouses, stuff like that, you know, and they could all find bits of bikes and make bikes and things like that, I thought it was quite good, there

¹⁸ plans submitted for the Braehead Housing Estate, available at <https://canmore.org.uk/collection/587915>

was never any trouble. [dlw – and that went straight down to Clarkston Road?] Yeh, uhu, all the way, I used to take it as a short cut down to the paper shop, the terrain's a bit rough, with brambles and that...I used to keep it clear...

[transcripts: *Rab*, Cathcart Barbers]

This is not gifted land, it seems to have a complex ownership pattern but the uses made across the site are of what could be termed an 'imagining commons' pattern. The families around 'the field', this piece of left over ground, look after the ground – cutting and caring for paths, building play areas, using the ground as common ground together – while there is no giftedness of this land to common use, it is being used *as if* common ground – practices are being undertaken across it which are carrying an imaginative commitment to common ground.

'brambles'

This kind of imaginative practice also takes place across another key local site. Cathcart Old Cemetery was opened in 1878 to the layout designs of William McKelvie (Williamson, Riches, & Higgs, 1990, p. 539). McKelvie was Superintendent of Parks and Cemeteries in Greenock and then Dundee, developing from a gardener to an engineer. His design work is part of an ongoing garden cemetery movement that had begun in Paris in the early 19thC and had taken root in Glasgow and Dundee under the influence of Stuart Murray, the Curator of the Glasgow Botanic Gardens who had been instrumental in the layout of the Glasgow Necropolis in 1831 (Dingwall, 2014). This is a place of shifting, multiple narratives that opens towards future research, with diverse Jewish and Muslim cemeteries adjoining the original Christian burial

areas, with distinct place-making and -breaking practices, disruptive markings and recent anti-muslim graffiti¹⁹. The complexities of my developing form of research into some of those groupings and practices is constrained for the purposes of this thesis through issues of time and trust (note reflexive work on the making of the Field Text, above). This thesis seeks to develop a way of 'being with' that will bear fruit into such complexities of local multiple narratives across extended periods of future research. But within the constraints of this early attentiveness to practices across the cemetery, the sense of it being a different kind of place through design is present in the transcripts - the evocative garden layout of the cemetery is carried into the interviews

'...And this is a lee, I have taken many thousands of pictures of the cemetery itself in all seasons with the big trees there,...the trees are in lines, with you know corridors, whatever you call them which actually go that way but most people tend to walk across, across the alleys, it's just the most magical place.

[transcripts: *Calum & Ruth*, Dogwalking]

But one of the seasonal activities in the cemetery is the gathering of masses of brambles. I had noticed brambles in other parts of Cathcart through walks and the abundance of them within the cemetery area was commented on but also the practice of gathering, a seasonal joint activity of going to gather.

...that particular bit just now, it's good for the brambles, the bramble crop this year is quite incredible...we're not the only people gathering them

¹⁹ http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13207401.Vandals_target_Muslim_graveyard_in_Glasgow/

...lots of brambles in the cemetery and that's a significant thing (laughs) because people do collect them and it's one of the bonuses of having an overgrown cemetery is that, you know, the brambles take over, and I mean, just this week, we've spoken to three different sets of people also collecting brambles [dlw- do they collect them just as they're passing or is it an act of purpose] Yes, they purposely go to collect brambles, well one guy said, well I used to make bramble wine but I can't be bothered, but my wife sends me out to get the brambles for the jelly, so he was there with his box. In fact another of them whom we know quite well he said 'She said she's going to make the jelly this weekend, so I've got to do it!' and he had three bags chock-a-block full, 'got to get them in, to get them home this week' (laughs) and so people value something that's just happened by a bit of neglect and we do too...

[transcripts: *Calum & Ruth*, Dogwalking]

Again, there is no personal ownership to the land here. The gathering of brambles is occurring as an imaginative action of common ground.

These three local interpretive lines of articulating the space, expressed through the narratives around 'Edith's garden', 'the field' and 'brambles', can be woven and interlaced with one another to make a third emerging theme of informal owning. The most explicit of these lies with the gifted land of the community garden, but even here, the commonality is a practised one rather than a legally affirmed one. The physical participation across the ground of the field and the cemetery work with undertaking practices across an imagined common ground, where there is an 'informal' sense of sharing in what is here.



Figure 2.7

#imaginingcommonties project, April 2015. Photo by participant, used with permission.

2.5

Moving to an interruptive performance

In the sketched response of 1.3 to the problematics of the thesis, I referred to an act of the artist Richard Long in making a path in the grass, as a situated making through movement and the interrupting of *what is*. Ingold speaks of this as a *textile* making, distinct from a *hylomorphic* model, becoming those ‘...wayfarers in a terrain of tactile and sensuous learning’ improvising the next step with each other. The acts of gathering through section 2 have been about that learning work, carrying a theoretical framework of attentiveness to discordant local lines of becoming as creative resources in framing liberative actions of wisdom for the local church. As a practice of wisdom, this has been undertaken through a validated methodology of performative ethnography. But the next move is the improvisation, a textile making, following the materials here. It is making the steps in the grass, improvising a new path, even as a transitory, momentary action, interrupting *what is*. And performative ethnography provides validation methodologically also for this move.

There are three key decisions taken in moving from the Research Text to the **#imaginingcommonties** installation as an interruptive performative work, a culminating expression of *poietic hermeneutics* through this particular site, following the materials *here*. Those decisions can be framed around the third validating criteria of Cho & Trent within the preparatory stage – *craftsmanship*, carrying a multiplicity of voices and an advocacy through the materials.

The first of those decisions lay with situating the improvisation. D. Soyini Madison frames the parameters of this third validating criteria in this decision making process within

performative/critical ethnography, as a 'tactical/emergent' embodied action developed where

...performance and activism are mutually constitutive in the evocation of intimate habitation and co-performative witnessing because fieldwork "is not merely seen as an object to be externally described but as a realm to be intimately inhabited"...defining a distance between what is and what ought to be and that this distance designates a space where we have something to do.

(Madison, 2010, p. 225)

I took a decision that a space had opened up within the work of the Research Text through the first theme 'places of the soil/soiled places', and that the derelict Holmlea School carried potential in situating a work interrupting that space. The school had lain empty for ten years, steadily deteriorating. It had been spoken of several times within the Field Text both as a place of the soil, with a garden grown within the playground by the families of the children, and now as an abandoned and upsetting place. Through those narratives of the school, the symbol of the daffodil had taken shape. Bulbs had been given by the head-teacher to all the children in the school and planted in the playground. The daffodil carried meanings of the 'flourishing' language of the soil, but also through its remembered loss, and the covering of weeds, it also spoke of this particular damaged site.

The second decision lay with the action of walking across the Holmlea school site as a key performative work of the installation, as an embodied, participatory action. This grew out of the third theme 'informal owning & a return to the commons', where local tactical actions of walking across ground and working the land together shared in a collective imagination of

a common informal owning. The performative action for those participating lay with this action of walking and playing again in the playground of the derelict school, a work of reimagining the site as a place of common land, drawing the local tactical moves of *here* into play as an action interrupting the dereliction, bringing the flourishing tactics of *places of the soil* into play in this particular *soiled place*.

The third decision lay with constructing a focal point to bring about the walking through the playground of the school. For this I turned to ways of exploring and expressing the multiple voices of the Field Text in some way – how to share in this ‘attending to the lines of others’? To return to the opening image – how do we walk the grass together as an improvising creative remaking of *here*, with what is to hand in the Field Text?

To hold together something of the disparate visual, audio and textual multiple voicings of the Field Text I turned to the work of a Glasgow illustrator who recently completed his PhD at Glasgow School of Art. Mitch Miller has developed the ‘dialectogram’ to carry such disparate ethnographic material occurring across particular local spaces. His large scale drawings arise out of interview, ethnographic practice and the tending to the particularities of a place for people²⁰. Working with street-level and concrete experiences of place, these

²⁰ Two further approaches to holding this data together were also built into the process developing this focal point for the installation. The first lies locally in Scotland with the work of the early Scottish chorographic mapmaker, Rev. Timothy Pont, who trained in St Andrews University 1580-1583 before going on to map much of Scotland over the next 12 years or so. His maps carry sketches and text in defining movement through a landscape, with one of his most intense mappings, Renfrew 33, covering the area within which I now work and live. The second is an ‘emergent practice’ of deep mapping (Biggs, 2011) which Iain Biggs speaks of as an ‘essay’ of place in a lecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture in 2010, with the ‘interweaving [of] many disparate, tensioned strands of experience, genres of writing, knowledge positions and narrative perspectives so as to produce a richer, more resonant patterning of meaning’ (Biggs, 2010; access date 31.01.14)]

are subjective, passionate and open-ended sketches of relations and experiences in place Miller (2013)²¹. I developed and drew three dialectograms from the Research Text as ethnographic experimentations (see the discussion on developing the first sketchings, pp83-84), inviting participation within the installation. Situated within the playground, they intend to prompt a performative and responsive walking through: 'Edith's Garden'; 'Genealogies'; and 'Transitions'. These were shared and discussed with the participants in the project prior to going to printing.

Through these three decisions '**#imaginingcommonties**', a culminating local tactical performative work of *poietic hermeneutics*, took place in April 2015. The next section will set out the making of this work in the local site, undertaking within it a work of entangled reflexivity in the involvement of my own faith community in the interruptive tactic, where we also are interrupted through this performative work.

²¹ (Miller, 2013, access date 31.01.14)

DIALECTOGRAMS

3. CRAFTING INTERRUPTIONS:

tactics towards new becomings

Chapter 3 depicts the making of an interruption through the apparatus. Here I turn to the making of the temporary installation project **#imaginingcommonties**, *'to form common practice across a piece of land and create possibilities'*. This completes the work of the thesis in arguing for a valid methodological apparatus to a poietic tactical action within a wisdom trajectory for the church, crafted here as a kinetic performative work of entangled ecclesial participation in creative liberative practices through the local site.



www.imaginingcommonties.wordpress.com

to form common practice across a piece of land and create possibilities

Figure 3.1

Postcard image used in publicity for #imaginingcommonties installation, 2015

3.1

Weaving the interruption:

warp & weft in making the installation [here](#)

3.1.1

Negotiating the site

The decision to commit to the derelict Holmlea Primary School as the site of the installation work **#imaginingcommonties** brought questions about how to negotiate the site. Discussions with those involved around the ‘*culturalhijack*’ thesis of Ben Parry at University of West of Scotland, Paisley raised the prospect of a non-agreed planting of daffodil bulbs across the desolate playground, which would appear in the early spring, amongst the weeds. But the logistics of undertaking this consciously as a working against the abandonment of the site were problematic. And constructing a participative performative work, open to any to wander across the playground, necessitated approvals. I began working on information sheets which would provide the basis for opening up the site for the period of the work. I chose to approach Glasgow Life, who function as an enabling provider of cultural and sporting initiatives within Glasgow, as a negotiating partner for the project in discussions with the local council over access. In developing the information sheets around the project I shared early drafts with Chris Leslie, Scottish BAFTA film documentarist, who had negotiated similar projects with Glasgow Life. Our work had intersected through my pilot project in Motherwell *Naming Fragments*. His brutal comments on my first theological and academic setting of the project significantly shifted the way of approach to Glasgow Life, setting out the project in quick-to-read images, carrying a brief description which aligned with the aims of Glasgow Life developed in the *Velocity* projects of the Commonwealth Games 2014, and marking the community participation in what was taking place. I also signalled my completing of the pilot project in Motherwell, carried out in consultation with the local authority. The boldness of

‘pre-images’ of the project, used in publicity, and included at the start of this section, came out of this interaction.

Glasgow Life were very quickly supportive of the project and we opened up discussions with Glasgow Council over access to the site for the day of the installation. I had carried out an assessment of the site from the railings and identified the remnants of the old garden down the centre of the front playground and the graffitied playground shelter at the rear as key locations for structuring the work on site. Discussions were undertaken with meetings in the playground. The stability of the playground shelters were assessed by council engineers and deemed to be stable. The project and the detailed dialectograms were submitted and assessed for ‘political bias’ in the context of the impending General Election close to the time of the proposed installation taking place. I was given the keys to the site the day before the installation.

3.1.2

Growing daffodils

I noted previously that the daffodil had begun to take shape as a key double symbol of ‘flourishing’ and now ‘being amongst weeds’ in this damaged site. Various routes were explored in shaping a best approach to drawing the daffodil significantly into the installation. Early forays were made into the possibility of making large paper daffodils, threading a local line of papermaking on the River Cart here, extending back to the arrival of French Huguenots

as immigrants to Scotland, following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. But these proved logistically difficult to follow through. I explored the prospect of growing the daffodils in the remnants of the garden in the playground, but it was too damaged to safely plant upwards of 2000 daffodils within the available time. I spoke with some of my allotment participants, exploring possibilities of growing the bulbs in small pots which could be carried down and sat within the garden space on the day. Cost, transport and space needed to care for these individual potted daffodils made this unworkable within our time frame.

Our response lay as a church to committing to growing the daffodils along a stretch of ground which had once been a common path to the side of the church, going towards fields at the back, before housing had been constructed across the area in the 1950s. The path remained as a strip of rough grass and overgrown bushes. Across December 2014 and into January 2015 in significantly poor weather around 2000 daffodil bulbs were planted. The project was timed for April, just after Easter, with the expectation that the bulk of the daffodils would be flowering at that point.

3.1.3

Making the dialectograms

The dialectograms were developed through January - February 2015, drawn up at A1 size. Various approaches to upscaling and printing onto various materials and plastics were explored and costed. The decision to commit to a cotton type material was taken on the basis

of cost, texture, reducing the length of the installation to a 4hr period and positioning them within the openings of the rear shelter. The large scale printing was carried out by the Centre for Advanced Textiles at Glasgow School of Art, providing guidance and advice on both the suitability of the material for these particular outdoor conditions and the printing process to get the best quality visual.



Figure 3.2

Image of textile installation of dialectograms at Holmlea School, as part of the #imaginingcommonities project 2015. Photo © Graeme Clark 2015, used with permission.

3.2

The Interruptive Performance

The installation took place on Saturday 18th April 2015, between 10am and 2pm in the playground of the derelict Holmlea Primary School. The dialectograms were tied in place in between the columns of the playground sheds, with a highly coloured graffitied rear wall acting as a vibrant backdrop to the monochrome sketches and text. A group of us gathered the daffodils from where we had grown them in the land around the church, bringing them down the streets to the playground. Publicity for the project had been through an interview carried by a local paper²², with posters across local shops, social media, and a dedicated website²³ and twitter feed around #imaginingcommonties. With the impending UK General Election invitations had been issued also to local candidates to come and walk through and respond. Although the keys to the site gave access to a gate at the back of the playground there were also occasional openings in the railings through which people came and left. Leaflets covering the project were handed out in the streets adjoining the school through the opening period of the installation. As people came into the site they were given a postcard with some details of the project and this invitation:

walk across Holmlea School playground again, place daffodils in the school garden, read stories of local meaning in the mural shed at the back, mark and trace your own paths of meaning across the installation – for a few hours the playground is common ground

While it was difficult to judge across the size of the playground and with different openings where people came and left, around 50 people came through the site within the four hour period of the installation, comprising various ages from toddlers through to one lady approaching 100 years old. There was a mix of people from those who had known the

²² : <http://m.glasgowsouthandeastwoodextra.co.uk/what-s-on/leisure/art-nature-and-life-in-cathcart-1-3744756>

²³ www.imaginingcommonties.wordpress.com

school, been taught in it or been teachers, to those who lived near in the tenements, or passed by it most days. The only political candidate to respond from six was the SNP candidate, Stewart McDonald, who subsequently won the Cathcart Constituency. He came with his campaign team, and alongside the local MSP, James Dornan.

People wandered across the playground, talked, drew, wrote, read, ran around and played. For a time we formed common practice across this desolate playground and created possibilities. Within the pilot project, *naming fragments*, shifting narratives were held only as remembered moments. Here, those shifts were purposely recorded and analysed as a way of shaping new lines of development out of the performative work. Those recordings were through the writings and drawings on the postcards, and interviews with a group whom I termed 're-weavers'.

3.2.1

#imaginingcommonties: *analysis of responses*



Here I undertake a thematic analysis on the postcard responses in relation to the developed intent of this local project '*to form common practice across a piece of land and create possibilities*'. This is the tactical/emergent work, in Madison's terms, the space of 'doing' for this project. How do the recorded responses open up possibilities across this site?

Figure 3.3

Entering the installation, #imaginingcommonties project 2015, participant photo, used with permission

The first set of responses lies with the postcards, given out as people came into the playground and given back in as they left. Not all those who came chose to write and complete. In total, 28 postcards were returned, with notes and sketches across them. These are analysed under three categories: memories evoked; experiences of this moment; paths forward.

memories evoked

A primary memory here lay with remembering playing in the playground, games played and experiences undertaken:

...I lobbed a sad little snowball over the rails into the boy's playground and was caught by the terrifying Miss MacGilvray...

'...smelly boys' toilets...'

'...standing under the blossom tree pretending to get married...'

'...playing in playground doing – British Bulldogs...'

'...sitting on top of the stone block making up songs...'

Teachers are named and remembered, sometimes painfully, 'The piano played as we came into school in the morning. The teacher would come in and we would curtsy. Although very quiet I still got the strap.'

And a number of responses construct a wider framework of relations around the school:

'...I passed the school...on my paper run and going to meet my dad out the back gate at Weirs and going to the Berridale Allotments'

'...remember going past on the bus and seeing the daffodils and watching the children playing in the playground'

‘...my friend went to this school and lived in Tulloch Street. His mother could see him in the playground from her top floor flat’

‘When Merrylee housing estate was built...Holmlea became very full up...’

Amongst these evoked memories though, there is an expressed word that *here I was made*, in some significant way. One participant, who fills the postcard with sketches and drawings and words, writes ‘I was shaped and formed in these classrooms, this playground’ and ‘playing cops and robbers with Jamie, who’s now a policeman’. This sense of the playground space as a place of shaping us and who we are is one line of a new textility being re-expressed into this derelict space.

experiences of this moment

The second category of responses in the postcards lay with what this moment felt like. Those narratives broke into two broad expressions – the sadness around the dereliction; and the enjoyment of the installation. There is a clear emotional attachment to this ‘dear place’, there is shame, pity, sadness, one describes it as a ‘haunting experience’.

The different elements of the installation are picked up in the responses – the daffodils, the drawings and being in the experience of playing, again, in the playground

‘...love the idea of the daffodils’

‘...love the drawings...’

‘...dialectograms are so interesting – to read other people’s stories as well as my own!’

‘struck by the feeling of peace within the playground’
‘...reliving playground games with Rolo the dog – great
to see this icon up close’

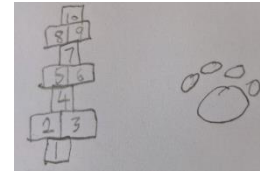


Figure 3.4
Sketch response on installation postcard, from
participant. Photo © derrick I watson 2015

A second line of a new textility begins to open here within two summary statements of participants who point to the embodied composite experience of the playground experience as shaping a different moment in the midst of the desolation of the site:

‘Voices crying out; memories shared; footsteps & paths that shape the future.
Weaving transitions...memories rekindled, smiles, tears, moments and voices heard.
Lots of emotions’

In the context of acknowledging his shifting experiences on the day, another points to ‘memories-textures-colours’ as shaping this moment of difference, away from the dereliction, for a moment.

paths forward

The third category of responses lay with hopes and fears for what happens next. The desire that it works for the community, an ‘alive’ space, safe for kids. Here is a living in a moment of what could be.

The analysis, within the context of the *#imaginingcommonties* project, points to a re-imagining of this damaged local site through a participatory experience of common walking across the playground, where a transitory reworking of ‘memories-textures-colours’ has

evoked a temporary re-making that begins to shape an activist local response.²⁴ This was cut short, with the indication given to me through Glasgow Council in the days leading up to the event, that the sale of the school was being finalised immediately after the project completing. This emerging line is paused at this point, subsequent to the event.

If this immediate local development of the project came to a pause at this point, the development of a work of 'reweaving' opens the door to a practice which can speak to a wider discourse around land and an ecclesial way of being. I will set out this particular path and model the possibility of an address into those wider discourses through this local particularity.

3.2.2

Improvising a reweaving



Figure 3.5

Daffodils laid in the playground,
#imaginingcommonties project 2015.
Photo © Graeme Clark, used with
permission.

This group is primarily developed from within my own faith community, Cathcart Baptist Church, although one couple who had been participants in the project also came into the group. They had once been within the church and are now part of a Church of Scotland congregation, carrying a thoughtful and

²⁴ The invitation to local candidates running in the General Election was part of the constructing of an approach to develop this work of re-making. In the wake of the wave of SNP victories across Scotland in the General Election of 2015, it carries some significance that the only candidate and team to respond and be involved with the project was the SNP candidate and now the current MP for the constituency.

engaged approach to their faith. This aspect of participation also gave them an opportunity to explore theologically their involvement.

In addition to this couple, there were seven from within our congregation who participated, through an open invitation to the church and direct approach. The group consisted of a mix of some who were long within this congregation to one who had been with us for around a year. Their participation consisted of a first discussion around the project, along with a copy of a participant information sheet and consent form, and the request to prepare towards the event through thinking around a bible text of their own choosing, as an act of engagement. On the day, we met on the grass of the church, and gathered the daffodils from where they had grown, carrying them down to Holmlea School together, and setting them up on the site. Each then wandered across the installation, and I audio interviewed them within the playground, reflecting on the project and the bible text that they had chosen. These were improvised responses in the midst of the installation, exploring immediate, in the moment, weavings of bible text and performance.

The seven texts chosen by the participants from Cathcart Baptist Church were:

- Luke 24: 13-35, the road to Emmaus
- Matthew 5:13-16, you are the salt of the earth...the light of the world
- Haggai 2.3
 - Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing?
- Lamentations 5.21
 - Restore us to yourself, Lord, that we may return; renew our days as of old
- Matthew 13.31-32

- 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.'
- 2Corinthians 4, weakness and resurrection
- Psalm 85.6
 - Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?

A primary approach undertaken by the reweaving participants lay with what I can signal by the phrase '*this is that*' – an analogical use of the biblical narrative, taken into this site of experience, exploring who we are here in the midst of this particular site. To return to the strapline of the project **#imaginingcommonties** – '*to form common practice across a piece of land and create possibilities*' – these analogical re-narrations begin to shape new lines of development within our own taking place here as a situated witnessing community.

Within the responses, easy separations of the witnessing community and the local site become hard to sustain. An entangled re-making of both the local site and ourselves is here as a new 'in-between' line of becoming.

'*This is that*' breaks down into reflections inwards and reflections outwards.

monologue: speaking to ourselves

Jack works with the text in Luke 24 of the Emmaus Road journey. The walk down through the streets with the daffodils, the uncertainty around it and then a moment when Jesus is in the midst

– there is a journey that goes on in the road to Emmaus, an element of that journey where's there a, where you don't really realise what's happening, where the disciples don't really realise what's happening – they don't recognise Jesus in that. And I think there's something, there are parallels in there where something has happened, something has been one way. It's then changed, they're on this road, they don't really know what's going on and then at the very end of it all of a sudden a light bulb goes on and they realise, so I think there are parallels

The sense here is that the project prompts a disorientation, there has been a walking away from Jerusalem, from the church. What is taking place is not understood until it is undertaken. But in taking up the daffodils and walking to the school, something of this event on the road to Emmaus takes place for him in the walking.

Similarly a questioning of who we are as the church within our locality reverberates through Millie's response. She has seen the school site full and busy and feels the emptiness of it now, but the questions that she raises through her text lie more with the church. She makes an analogy between our church and the mustard seed in Jesus' parable, and wonders how that mustard seed grows in the midst of so many changes, how do we, as a witnessing community extend this sense of taking part in a moment of hope and colour – 'it's been lovely today (to) be a part of this and see the growth of the daffodils and the brightness and the new hope and the spring, it's something that maybe even in this sort of area can continue'.

For another, Isla, what remains is the sense of an enduring God. In the midst of a damaged site, there is a renewing work here of community and remembering, but working with the text of Lamentations 5, the work of renewing occurs within a context of an enduring God

just really nice to see that sense of community and closeness and the longer scripture, where it says 'You, O Lord, reign forever, your throne endures...I think...even standing here is seeing God's kingdom...that as things can change within our community, God will remain true...

But there is also a developing thread of reflections outwards.

dialogue: speaking with another

Within the reflections of Mia, across both her audio recording and one of the postcards which she completed, the impulse to understand the church as a light in the darkness, is tempered through a sense in the project of needing to listen to open wounds here. The function of the daffodils, working as a local symbol of colour, hope and memory are simultaneously aligned with the light of the world within the parable in Matthew 5 – 'this is that' in a flexible metaphor of hope, which here is taking place in a symbol constructed through local memory and gifted action.

This sense of analogically placing a text of God's people into the entanglement of this moment and letting it be creatively expressive of the experience of here/now is central in the interviews with Sienna and Poppy. Building from the cry of Psalm 85.6, Sienna reads an action of freshness and reviving in this work together, a moment of new joy in a refreshing act:

...today, with the buzz of people all round about it again, children playing in the playground, the sun shining – everything just speaking of reviving life and the breathing of life into the space again which was really exciting...a joy among the people who were there

Poppy also takes up a theme of light in darkness, similar to Mia, but reading out of 2Corinthians 4, links living in the light of Jesus with God's creating work and identifying ourselves in our humanity as a creating people

...I think, yes, with those verses bringing light into darkness you want to bring restoring colour to people's lives and restoring vibrancy and restoring just the joy of life that can still be there.

Poppy's response is further significant in drawing a theological line from God's creativity to the creativity within the people around us

...I think that's what's struck me as I've been talking to people here is that creativity within people, like some of the things on the banners about people working in the area, tending gardens, keeping paths clear from brambles...and the daffodils, the head mistress giving everyone a daffodil

This leads into an exploration of creative light amongst the dark in our lives, and our calling to restore vibrancy and colour. She then turns to the project itself as an act of honesty, interested in 'what means something to people' and linking that act of honesty to the text in 2Corinthians 4 about 'honesty in our lives about living in the light and yet 'recognising that hard times happen and you see it in people's, who are walking about here, you can see it in their eyes, you can tell there's a lot of hardness and difficulties and sadnesses'

3.2.3

Situating the improvisation: validating the entangled ecclesial voicing

Where does the improvising, entangled, bricolage voice coming out of this performative moment sit ecclesially? What sort of validity does it carry? This section is directed towards the validity of the improvising voice/s arising through the **#imaginingcommonties** project. The following chapter, *Theological Parkour*, will return to the argument of the thesis, structured through a path being creatively run *in-between* the edifices of the church, the social and the academy, drawing the work to a concluding piece. But how do I situate the voices of the performative installation?

If we return to the validity criteria of Cho & Trent in relation to performative ethnography as a helpful structuring device within the core methodology of the thesis, I will situate the developing voice/s through part of their scaffolding work of validating the post-performance stage in the generation of possibilities and ongoing engagement. While various criteria of validity are present within their scaffold, these are built around the development of grounded re-interpretations being taken back into the threads of public life. Madison suggests that

...dialogical performance means one is a co-performer rather than a participant-observer. It is the embodied engagement of radical empiricism.

(Cho & Trent, 2009, p. 14)

Implications in this radical epistemology within ethnographic ‘performances of possibilities’ (Madison) lie with embracing ‘...a complex of dis/comfort as a result of incorporating competing ideologies into ...personal politics of interpretive processes...within a community in which a performance unfolds’ (Cho & Trent, 2009, p. 24). I will structure a validity to the voices arising in the project first through drawing them into critical relation with a theological action research model, as an action of interpretive dis/comfort, adding further nuance to their model in the process. I will then draw on further aspects of Cho & Trent’s scaffolding to situate the voices of the project ecclesially into a discourse of critical discipleship through the valuing of a ‘multiplicity of interpretations’; and exploring the ripple²⁵ effects of the voices into wider publics, through modelling an interaction with a composite work on the common good, within practical theology.

3.2.3.1

articulating a 5th voice?

Working broadly across the whole performative work, drawing on the direction of the **#imaginingcommonties** project, the reflections of participants and the conversations with the re-weavers into ecclesial discourse, one possible situating device is the Theological Action Research (TAR) proposal, modelling four voices in actions of ecclesial theological reflection. Developed by Cameron, Bhatti, Duce, Sweeney and Watkins in a collaborative work between

²⁵ The ‘ripple’ language here, comes from its use within the performance validity criteria of Cho & Trent (Cho & Trent, 2009, p. 25) where it is used to signal a sense of an ‘equity validity’. The performative work is both participating in a local discursive work of meaning-making and moving it in distinctive ways towards a longer lasting effect in the public space – the performance of the kinetic work is neither subjective nor objective but participating in a movement that is already underway.

a Roman Catholic college and a Church of England research centre, the model of theological reflection focuses around the interaction of four voices in the life of a faith community.

Starting in the faith practices of a community, TAR seeks to identify a tension between these living practices as expressing implied theological positions (*the operant theological voice*), and the articulated expressions of the theology of the community (*the espoused theological voice*). The exploration and analysis of differences between the *operant* and *espoused* voices in that tension are then brought into conversation with the *normative theological voice*, those things which the community name as authoritative for itself, and also the *formal theological voice*, bringing in wider theologies of the academy (Cameron, Bhatti, Duce, Sweeney, & Watkins, 2010).

TAR argues that the theology of the community takes place in disclosive moments in the continuing conversation between the four voices, not in the authority of one voice over the others. This disclosive, multi-voiced, interruptive, creative exploration of developing theologies in community, carries some resonances with my own work in its undertaking to reflect on the ambiguities, dislocations and challenges of practising faith in concrete situations of life. But my project brings challenges to their model. I will situate the improvising voice/s of the **#imaginingcommonties** project through an interaction between Clare Watkins, one of the collaborators on the TAR project, and Elaine Graham, who is critical of aspects of the model in relation to practical theology. I argue that the voices of the **#imaginingcommonties** project occur as a dis/comforting local action of interruption to the 'ethnography of faith' which structures TAR.

In 2013, Graham published an essay critical of aspects of the relationship being posited between practical theology and action research, and drawing in the TAR model to that critique (Elaine Graham, 2013). Watkins responded in a paper delivered at the *Ecclesial Practices* Conference in Durham in 2014 (Watkins, 2014). For my purposes, working towards situating the improvising bricolage voice of the project, the central issue in the critique and response of Graham and Watkins lies with a decision on epistemology and locations of attentiveness to God. In the fired up response of the conference paper, Watkins makes clear the working epistemology of TAR in relation to activist work in the world.

Theological Action Research, takes place as ‘a conversation between people who share already in an intimate communion in the Spirit – the ‘ethnography of faith’ (Watkins, 2014, p. 10). Seeking to respond to Graham’s critique around the prospect of commitment to normativity within the creative mode of action research, Watkins sets the boundaries of revelation *within* the church.

This reading normatively underpins theological action research’s insistence on ecclesial practice as the privileged place of revelation and names the complexity of this reality as proper to the communication of God’s word.
(Watkins, 2014, p. 7)

The conversation of four voices is explicitly stated as being carried out by those who are ‘on the same side’, carrying an agreed ‘ethnography of faith’ (Watkins, 2014, p. 9). The intent of the TAR project is internal to the ecclesia – the alignment of the operant practices of the church with ‘...the continuing activity of the Trinity in the life of the church and (so) the world.’ (Watkins, 2014, pp. 7,8). My dispute lies with the limitations of the word ‘so’. Within the participative and intensive Trinitarian theology which underpins my ontology through this

thesis, I cannot make that limitation. The improvising, entangled bricolage voice which is taking place through the performative work of **#imaginingcommonties** critiques the limitation of that 'so' in ways which support and echo the developing radical epistemology of Graham.

Throughout Graham's essay there is an orientation to the world that is distinct from the TAR project:

Ultimately, therefore, the purpose of reflective inquiry such as action research is the flourishing of the human and more-than-human world, in all its complexity and interconnectedness
(Elaine Graham, 2013, p. 172)

While Watkins, et. al., may argue that this too is their ultimate aim, TAR struggles to take account of the prospect of 'voices of disclosure and divine encounter' (Elaine Graham, 2013, p. 170) in the world as they address the church. This carries tensions in the particularities of local practice – what will it mean to be attentive to God *here*? What is disclosed about being the church *here* as distinct from *there*? For some that might not be a legitimate question. But the particularity of my research work and the prospective interruptions that it brings to the church through the detail of everyday life *here*, distinct from 'sharing in ethnographies of faith', argues for a validity to being attentive to patterns of God in the world which address the church critically – even if such voicing is potentially ambiguous and messy. In earlier work of the thesis, within the marginalised site of Glencairn Tower, I worked with a language of a *visceral body of Christ* as a way to theologically validate the voicing of the people and the site into the ecclesia, as the *witnessing body of Christ*. Watkins, in her defence of the TAR methodology defines it as a work of 'discerning the body of Christ' but is quite explicit that

this is the church community (Watkins, 2014, p. 15). As I have come into a new setting and have begun work with reflexivities of marginalising relations within the everyday, my theological validation has moved towards wisdom theologies, but the point is the same. A commitment to be attentive to local particularity as addressing the church in developing towards human flourishing *here*.

Within the TAR model the catalytic move in theological development lies with tensions between the *operant* and *espoused* theologies – there is significant value in exploring that tension creatively. But in situated work there is a further aspect in this catalytic theological work. Through practices undertaken a further local voicing is made. This is neither the *operant* nor the *espoused* voice. Within the **#imaginingcommonties** project this voice addresses the theology and practice of the church, the existing ‘ethnography of faith’. The kinetic performative work of my project brings a further nuance to the catalytic tensions of the *operant* and *espoused* voices of the model, prompting the question of a fifth situating voice into the model.

I am arguing that the bricolage voicing of the **#imaginingcommonties** project constitutes an attentiveness to the God ‘who continues to be revealed and encountered in the empirical world’ (Elaine Graham, 2013, p. 175) *here*. It raises a critical fifth voice into the theological action research model, as an interruptive local voice²⁶ towards the ecclesia, part

²⁶ This commitment parallels the second form of deep listening set out by Chris Shannahan in developing a theology of community organizing. in resourcing such a theology he argues for ‘...listening with critical openness to where we are...such attentive listening is vital if a spirituality of community organizing is to arise organically from and speak to the context within which actions are developed...engag(ing) with the stories which shape specific communities’ (C. Shannahan, 2013, p. 157)

of an 'embracing of a complex of dis/comfort' into our interpretive processes, while aiming towards the flourishing of *here*.

But the particular work of the re-weavers can also be validated, within a performative ethnographic criteria of interpreting through a multiplicity of voices²⁷, ecclesially linking this to a developing wider discourse in critical discipleship.

3.2.3.2

tones, colours and shades to our voicing

The reflections of those participating in the performative work from amongst my witnessing community of Cathcart Baptist Church are embryonic in shaping lines for future development out of the project. A more extended work of a committed long term reflective group on local makings may provide significant possibilities for developing a local public practical theology. This may point towards a response to the call of Eric Stoddart in developing a critical discipleship, in the wake of his research on a practical theology response to participation in the event of the Scottish Referendum in 2014 (Stoddart, 2014b, p. 347). The critical liberative ethic undertaken as a distinctive contribution of practical theology, which Stoddart developed for the large scale public event of the Referendum, I have brought into a small scale local everyday context, shaping the beginnings of new paths of exploration in a local theological participation. This takes in the 'encouragement' noted by Stoddart

²⁷ '...crafting knowledge and values anew from multiple perspectives' (Cho & Trent, 2009, p. 25), following Denzin.

...the sheer range of texts proffered by the...participants is fascinating. This is both an encouragement and a warning to practical theologians...an encouragement to provide spaces...that do not cohere around “approved” passages.

(Stoddart, 2016, p. 202)

The biblical texts used by the re-weavers, in their range and use, are deeply rich in prompting future development, opening up lines of new textility for us as a church in ways which defy coherence around an approved text for the project. But the work of the re-weavers also gives something of a response to the warning raised by Stoddart, of the struggle for alternative strategies to ‘proof-texting’ the bible in such a process. The strategy undertaken through much of the developing response to participation in the performative work of the **#imaginingcommonties** installation lay with a creative ‘*this is that*’ in a lightly held but creative bricolage. The theologian James W. McClendon defined a practice of ‘this is that’ biblical reading as distinctive in a baptistic vision of developing a theology taking place in

‘...the discovery, understanding or interpretation, and transformation of the convictions of a convictional community, including the discovery and critical revision of their relation to one another and to whatever else there is.’

(McClendon, McClendon, & Murphy, 2002, p. 23)

The responses of the re-weavers bring a focus to the situatedness of this baptistic ‘*this is that*’ and its loose creativity reinforces the positioning of the strategy, as in itself a poetic act:

The baptist “is” in “this is that” is therefore neither developmental nor successionist, but mystical and immediate; it might be better understood by the artist and poet than by the metaphysician or dogmatist.

(McClendon et al., 2002, p. 32)

Poetically, through the analogical work, lines are drawn of reviving, of joy as a collective working of us together, a blurring of 'light' imagery that analogically expresses the presence of Jesus through a local symbol of the daffodil, and sees in the local reworking an embraced work of new hope, of recolouring. In temple imagery of lost glory and yet the enduring of God in the midst of the change, trusting in words of a refreshing, reviving narrative, that is occurring, not simply as 'the people of God', but within the wisdom trajectory in the world that I have previously identified and argued for, it is a freshness, vitality and recolouring that is explored through a common walking with those amongst whom we are a situated people.

I will explore a third expression, within this validating criteria of the post-performative work of threading grounded re-interpretations into other publics, as a validating rippling effect into the public of questioning beyond the immediate and the local, prompted by this improvised, bricolage voice of the project. I will model this approach through an engagement with a composite work on 'common good', as a context linked thematically to the installation **#imaginingcommonties**.

3.2.3.3

grounding the commons here

The opening session of the British and Irish Association for Practical Theology (BIAPT) 2015 conference provided two papers on the theme of 'common good' given by Christopher Rowland and Timothy Gorringer, published jointly as a co-written essay, with responses (Gorringer & Rowland, 2016). My aim here is not to undertake a full critical analysis of these

papers but simply to make the case for the value of speaking the voice raised through the **#imaginingcommonties** project into the space provided by them, to model how such a voice can begin to speak to a wider context, as a validated local action of the radical epistemology pursued by Graham, in tentative steps arising out of critical communal discipleship in the performative moment.

The co-written paper intends to explore how to live in the public space committing to the common good. It is balanced between the philosophical assessment of what ‘the common good’ is, undertaken by Gorringer; and a theological learning from the apostle Paul on how to live hopefully in the public space, negotiating and creating space as a community, which is explored by Rowland. There are resources here, particularly around the interpretive work of hope in apocalyptic literature by Rowland, drawing it into everyday experience, which can bear fruit in future developing of the work of the re-weavers. But we can also ask a series of questions of the common good in theological discourse that is taking place within the papers.

In the opening section, the structure of change argued for by Gorringer is tied to macro level political decisions – shifting economies and renewing tax regimes to seek common equity of life (Gorringer & Rowland, 2016, p. 105). Those are long term strategies. **#imaginingcommonties** opens up tactics of immediate local participation in questions of the public space and a practising of the commons – how do these tactics and strategies relate to one another? Is the immediate call to macro level changes debilitating for local communities?

A commitment to negotiations of the presence of faith communities of hope in the public space occurs through the paper. But there is little about how you negotiate in that

public space from positions of limited power. **#imaginingcommonties** opens up a messy construction of a bricolage hope, made through differing threads in which we, as a witnessing community, can *sketch* differing interpretations, as part of our re-weavings, but the negotiations towards the remaking took place with little other than the project as a negotiating tool in the public space.

Rowland repeats a description of our contexts as *constraints* (Gorringe & Rowland, 2016, pp. 107, 108). In contrast, *here*, the local site has been full of possibilities – why define our contexts as constraining? He describes the work of Paul in glowing terms:

I have come to admire and learn from the amazing feat of ingenuity, improvization (*sic.*), survival and creative living to find a space, not only for himself, but also his communities, to explore different ways of living, as he negotiated ways for people to live in anticipation of the age to come.

(Gorringe & Rowland, 2016, p. 108)

Such creativity comes because of the *possibilities* occurring in what is to hand – *here* is a means towards a ‘sketching of hope’. **#imaginingcommonties** opens up possibilities in this site as ‘complex activist’ (Gorringe & Rowland, 2016, p. 108) work with what is *here*.

And a final question into the paper. In working into the public space Rowland sets two approaches to that participation in tension – a prophetic protest and a painful struggle to work out what hope means as an embodied public witness. Within this latter context he declares there is no blueprint for this – hopes are realized in ‘...experimental and contextual’ moves, ‘...an unscripted following’ (Gorringe & Rowland, 2016, p. 110). What does ‘unscripted

following' look like for the local church, committed to its site? **#imaginingcommonties** sets out a practice of such experimental making of a path.

These questions move out into a wider debate also around the nature of public theology. In an associated paper, Elaine Graham assesses the contribution of Gorringe and Rowland to the conference (Graham, 2016). She finds a level of agreement in methodology around the contextualising of theology, although noting a distinction in emphasis over the contextual work that Rowlands undertakes on Paul, with her own contextual commitment to our own readings.

Again, in ways which are helpful for situating my own work, she argues against eliding 'public' with 'political' in shaping public theology (Graham, 2016, p. 148), drawing material and discursive conditions of the public space into play. But her question of *what it means to do theology in public?* (Graham, 2016, p. 149) can be answered differently in the wake of the **#imaginingcommonties** work. Her response to the question lies with dialogue and debate in a '...diverse and contested public square.' Earlier I expressed an image used by Tim Ingold to depict the direction of the thesis, around that of a walking alongside each other in the grass, and looking beyond us to shape a conversation in movement, in contrast to the Levinas 'face to face' meeting. **#imaginingcommonties** suggests that there is a further response to the question set by Graham on doing theology in public, around the work of *making together*. This is making explicit what seems to be present implicitly in the descriptions of doing public theology that follow subsequently in her paper.

Each of these questions could be extended in further discussion – their inclusion here is to point to a threading of the performative work of the #imaginingcommonties project into wider public discourse as a third expression of a validating criteria of the post-performance stage of my methodology within the thesis. These three positionings of the project, as an action of interpretive dis/comfort, as valuing a multiplicity of interpretations and as setting ripples out into wider publics, situate and validate the improvising, entangled, bricolage voices of the performance both methodologically and ecclesially. Within the following and concluding section we will turn to an assessment of the thesis argument through the local social context, the church and the academy, three contested publics which situate contemporary practical theology.

4. THEOLOGICAL PARKOUR:

freerunning *in-between* 3 publics

Chapter 4 locates the effects of the interruption and the development of the apparatus into three 'publics' - the local material-discursive site, the practices of the church, and the discourse of practical theology in the academy. Here I evaluate the significance of the research for practical theology and indicate areas of research emerging from the thesis.

Particular possibilities for acting exist at every moment, and these changing possibilities entail a responsibility to intervene in the world's becoming, to contest and rework what matters and what is excluded from mattering.

(Barad, 2003, p. 827)

I return to this quote in this final section because it expresses the bigger discourse which ultimately concerns me of which the thesis is an expression within my own situating practice. The thesis is a starting point. That starting point is an argument for a theologically & methodologically valid practice which can play within that wider discourse. The thesis makes the case for the apparatus of *poietic hermeneutics* to provide a way for the local *ecclesia* to intervene in local becomings through practices marked by material and social attentiveness, entangled reflexivity and performative interruptive re-makings. It speaks distinctly to that wider discourse through being an action of a faith community – what kind of differences does it make to seek such contestation as a local ecclesial acting? *Poietic hermeneutics*, through addressing a tension in practical theology, is positioned as such an ecclesial action outwards which speaks into that wider discourse. The thesis itself is a validating methodological apparatus arguing for *poietic hermeneutics* as a wisdom practice for the local church acting in this wider discourse.

This takes the work into questions of public theology. David Tracy's depiction of 'three publics' in the shaping of participative public theology underpins key voices in the field. In this introductory piece I locate my approach to this section as a catalytic work linked to motifs within an apologetics of presence in the public space positioned in the writing of Elaine Graham.

Writing in *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Public Theology in a Post-Secular Age*, Graham is arguing for changes to public theological discourse within post-secular settings which describe 'a public square that is both more sensitive to and suspicious of religious discourse' (E. Graham, 2013, p. 21). Working against possible responses to this of 'theological identity politics' focusing on ecclesial practices, or confrontational 'propositional apologetics'

(E. Graham, 2013, p. 25), she moves towards a form of *imaginative apologetics*, as a way to think about how these three publics can interact. This is pitched as transforming the wider public, in the light of ‘the difference it makes to inhabit such a world view’ (E. Graham, 2013, p. 28). My work holds to such a commitment, but lightly – it needs the interruptive critique of Lieven Boeve on any closed narrative, a position taken in 4.3 below. However the motifs which Graham set out as characteristic of *this imaginative apologetics of presence* in public theologies, are helpful in situating my work publicly.

These three motifs in this form of public theology, are ‘the welfare of the city’; ‘speak truth to power’; ‘justify ourselves in reasoned debate’ (E. Graham, 2013, pp. 28, 29). In the **#imaginingcommonties** project, distinct approaches to these three motifs are present. Within 4.1, below, I will commit towards the *blossoming* of *here* as my primary work, a direction which carries the first two motifs. The third motif, defending and justifying in the public square the legitimacy of ‘the hope within us’, is more complex. The negotiated project sources its legitimacy into the public square through the first two motifs and the grounded-ness in the local. Theological legitimacy is directed back towards the academy and the church.

This interruptive tension which may be expressed in relation to these three motifs of an *imaginative apologetics of presence* in Graham, positions me experientially as a minister within the depiction by Andrew Morton of Duncan Forrester’s approach to the three publics:

The Centre for Theology and Public Issues has often referred to this trio of its interlocutors — Church, academy and public — and described itself as a meeting place of the three. The point about the Forrester theology is that it is fashioned within that conjunction and simultaneity, when the three publics are faced in the same place at

the same time. I repeat that I am not talking only of the communication of that theology but of its creation. The conjunction is the crucible. As with any crucible, it is not comfortable to inhabit; it is a grinding experience; the tension is painful, a kind of passion.

(Morton, 2004, p. 31)

I choose the metaphor of ‘parkour’ as a running, jumping, freeing line of movement between the three publics depicted within public theology as a way to structure this last section, to convey the sense of making a path in this, at times, painful crucible of three publics. *Freerunning movements in Public*, 4.1 and *Freerunning movements in the Church*, 4.2, relate to the making of a response to the 1st problematic of the thesis - *how do we, as a particular, situated, witnessing community, intervene in local material-discursive becoming, contesting what matters and what is excluded from mattering, here?* This is not a response of resolution, but of new lines of becoming to explore and take forward. 4.3, *Freerunning movements in the Academy*, resolves the 2nd problematic, through which the response to the 1st problematic is methodologically and theologically validated – *the elision of poiesis within a practical theology discourse*. I then define the work of *re-siting* as a work of entangled reflexivity in response to hegemonic concerns in poietic work raised in 1.4, under that resolution.

4.1

Freerunning movements in public

4.1.1

Holmlea: a paused work

The Holmlea project paused subsequently to the installation/performance work. The site was sold the following week and skips moved in, beginning to undertake some internal clearing work. By autumn 2015 the skips had been taken away and there has been no further progress on the site which has reverted to a weed strewn desolate place. Subsequent to the completion of the thesis there will be scope to begin anew some approaches with the current owners.

However, the project in itself made connections which have been developed with Glasgow Life. In May 2015 we provided a workshop base for the participation of the video artist Kit Mead²⁸, as part of the Southside Art Trail (DressForTheWeather, 2016). I have also been invited to share on my work within the context of a developing Glasgow Life project

²⁸ Kit's work has a number of resonances with my own directions, with similar resources in the work of Gilles Deleuze. His work is described in his profile as:

Kit Mead's practice articulates the presence of different temporal experiences by exploring the dynamics of uncertainty and transition created in the changing representation of environments....He produces durational and experiential installations along with digital video based work that contain compressed information via non-linear narratives, repetitive structures and irrational cuts allowing moments, histories and locations to entangle and intersect...
(Mead, 2016)

'Artery: from the Angel to the Elephant' as a renewal project along Paisley Road West, being launched initially in 2016²⁹.

4.1.2

Wider land questions in a Scottish public

But the argument of the installation, carried in the **#imaginingcommonties** naming and the tag line *'to form common practice across a piece of land and create possibilities'*, also moves into local discursive engagements.

The question of common land in Scotland has gained significant traction in recent years, with a primary catalyst for that lying in the work of Andy Wightman, now a Scottish Green MSP in Holyrood, since the Scottish Parliament elections of May 2016. His book, *The Poor Had No Lawyers* (Wightman, 2013), is a seminal book in resourcing community activist work in Scotland around common land themes on a legal basis and his ongoing study of *Who*

²⁹ The drafted proposal paper for Artery sets out the intentions, with clear overlapping approaches between the Holmlea Project and this proposal:

We propose to create a sense of interconnectivity, focusing on the historical and contemporary community, between James Alexander Ewing's **Angel** statue on Paisley Road Toll to Kenny Hunter's **Commonwealth Elephant** in Bellahouston Park. These two well loved landmarks sit at either end of the motorway route as it dissects Paisley Road West and Artery will enable the activity and support to bring together communities from both ends.

This will be achieved through a series of urban arts, sporting, cultural and environmental activities, with the emphasis of working together. To help develop along the corridor focused around local community venues such as Kinningpark Studio Complex, learning centres such as Ibrox Library, vacant plots or community gardens initiative like Ibrox Flower Fields (Urban Roots) and disused shops or light industrial units.
(Chambers, 2015)

owns Scotland? is now influencing and critiquing Scottish Government policy through work on the Land Reform Bill underway 2014-16 at Holyrood, and passed 16th March 2016³⁰.

In correspondence³¹ with Andy Wightman on the **#imaginingcommonties** project, I clarified a particular positioning of the project as a poetic work of local informal practice in Cathcart which runs alongside legal argument as a work of re-imagining possibilities in embodied actions³². He provided links to a wider context where similar directions are being explored, in the *Commonty* group (<http://thecommonty.blogspot.co.uk>) an activist arts group based in Dumfries and Galloway; and the *Doomster Hill* project undertaken by the artist Matt Baker in Govan (details at http://www.urbanrealm.com/features/363/Doomster_Hill.html). In addition the work is also aligning with common ground issues in North Glasgow. *The Children's Wood*, and *North Kelvin Meadow Campaign*³³ are being worked as statements against the sale of the land for housing by Glasgow Council³⁴. These provide threads for future development of the intent of the **#imaginingcommonties** project.

³⁰ for details of the progress of the Land Reform Bill, see Wightman's website *Land Matters*, at <http://www.andywightman.com/hot-topics/land-reform-2014-2016>.

³¹ private email correspondence, December 2014

³² I had undertaken local research on land ownership across the area of the school and the land around, to explore any potential legal footholds, but any early patterns of common use had fallen within the various grabs noted through Wightman's book, with a cohesive land ownership of the area from Norman times, under the Barony of Cathcart as the 'nine merklands of Bogton'.

³³ The Campaign to retain these grounds is still underway – the Children's Wood is expressed as an issue of connecting to the land locally:

The Children's Wood on North Kelvin Meadow, and the Meadow itself, make up the last wild space in the west-end of Glasgow. This space is vitally important to the community. Regular events are organised by the community in The Children's Wood, designed to connect children to nature, raise aspirations and bring people together...The Children's Wood is situated near some of the most unequal areas in Scotland – we think the land is invaluable for building a better future for young people and families in the area.

(from <https://thechildrenswood.com/about/>)

³⁴ This intentional working of the ground together as an activist statement is also being defined as a developing social tactic in recent work by Carol Nettle. (Nettle, 2016).

The performative installation also reverberates with the work of a writer/activist colleague of Wightman's, Alastair McIntosh. He grew up on Lewis, off the west coast of Scotland, and writes of place and spirituality out of the situatedness of Lewis. Now a Quaker and an ecologist based in Govan and, amongst many activities, a founder and, now, Director of GalGael, a boat building community who seek to heal social and relational wounds inflicted through the loss of the Clyde shipbuilding industry to Glasgow through hand building wooden boats. McIntosh came to prominence through his involvement with community land ownership on the island of Eigg.

He begins *Soil and Soul*, by quoting from the poet Hugh MacDiarmid. In *Reflections in a Slum*, the poet questions his pitying of a woman in a slum – 'thin and gaunt, in pink tights despite the cold' – as an insufficient looking. McIntosh sets the approach of his work in the language of MacDiarmid:

That 'more' is the capacity to see a person's potential for blossoming: to see what they could be and maybe still can be...'And I *am*', MacDiarmid says...'And I *am concerned with the blossom*'

(Hugh MacDiarmid, *Reflections in a Slum*, quoted in A. McIntosh, 2004, p. 1)

McIntosh emphasises the *here-ness*, *this-ness* and *particularity* of where we are in grounding our living³⁵. Through his emancipatory land projects he draws a transformational quality to identity of place – '...a person belongs inasmuch as they are willing to cherish and be cherished by a place and its people' (A. McIntosh, 2004, p. 4). After meeting with him, he wrote this note to me within my copy of *Island Spirituality - 'in the liberation of theology'*. My

³⁵ Referencing the *haeccity* of Duns Scotus in the process and marking the narrative that the philosopher-theologian of the 13thC had studied on Lewis at the Teampall na Trinaid at Carinish (Alastair McIntosh, 2013), p3

understanding of this liberative quality to his work comes in these twin commitments to **blossoming here**, and the impact of those commitments to our thinking and acting. *Poietic hermeneutics* undertakes a similar work of entangled attentiveness towards blossoming here, as a work of remaking us together, in south Glasgow. Through that *haeccity* we take shape differently – a significant difference lying in the work arising through a witnessing community inhabiting a setting without a strong self-identity of place or of faith, in the model of Lewis. This distinction of context between my own work and that of McIntosh is reinforced through the assessment of Northcott on the Harris superquarry and the successful defeat of the Redland Aggregates proposal by the people of Harris, undertaken with the aid of the activist work of McIntosh and others:

Redland Aggregates had sought to divide the community using a traditional anti-environmentalist strategy, setting nature conservers against people and community preservers. But ultimately the strategy backfired for, as McIntosh confesses in his testimony, the people of Harris do not have an 'environmental theology', but what they do have, and what they came to realise during the public inquiry, is a religiously and culturally distinctive way of life that is intimately connected with a particular place and landscape

(Northcott, 2015, p. 97)

My work develops a particular tactic for similar working out of *ways of life*, rather than through agreed 'environmental theologies'. But it offers possibilities also in sites where there are multiple ways of life taking shape which may be ambiguously and messily carried across variations in social and cultural relations. But these parameters crossing over our approaches, of *blossoming*, *land*, and *here*, offer rich seeds in developing the themes arising in the immediate project of the research, **#imaginingcommonties**.

4.2

Freerunning movements in the church

This was embryonic work. The thesis has been in development in the midst of a living witnessing community, where lives have been getting lived and shaped, and pulled apart, and we have sought to dwell and to grow with one another. The thesis has been one thread that I have woven into the material living of us as that living witnessing community here in Cathcart, Glasgow. As an embryonic work, a discourse around participating in the work has had to be developed in the midst of the doing of the research. Through the completed work we can now begin to explore a developing local attentiveness through practices of gathering, of re-siting, of re-weaving. There is a way to speak of what participating in this work looks like.

Reflecting on the work of the project, the '*gathering act*', was shaped through my drawing of the work in Motherwell into discussion with a few who were long term residents within Cathcart, as a way to compensate for my lack of local knowledge in the early stages of ministry here. Where we gathered grew out of those discussions and walks. Decisions on where to gather materials, where we situate ourselves in the gathering of materials to hand, is a significant choice. I currently have four potential projects in early stage discussions for future development. These flow from the research project and a developing understanding of the material-social situatedness of our community:

1. The main road through Cathcart is Clarkston Road. In the last ten years the character of the shops has shifted from 'functional' shops like butcher, baker, towards health and beauty shops, associated with hair stylists, nails, gyms. This was noted within the research interviews. I had early discussions with Mitch Miller on collaborating in a joint piece of gathering work along Clarkston Road shops, extending a street model of research which he developed in Dennistoun, in the east end of Glasgow.

2. I would like to return to an early noticed jarring of intimacies of space taking place in narratives around Old Cathcart cemetery – in the research proposal I describe this as a collision between *'constructions of loss inscribed in graves and headstones; and constructions of exclusion and separation inscribed through graffiti'*. There were complex issues in pursuing this in the framework of the thesis but it remains a seminal experience of early attentiveness here that needs further development.

3. We have links with a group supporting and enabling refugees into Glasgow, with the prospect of a developing work with families within our facilities over the next period. One of my agreed roles within the shaping of this work will lie with gathering narratives around the immediate experiences of these families within this new local context.

4. Across the road from Cathcart Baptist Church lies Merrylee housing estate, built by Glasgow Corporation in the 1950s. There is a developing issue around private landlords and multiple ownership that has come through in pastoral work and in the research context. A film depicting protests around attempts by Glasgow Corporation to sell the housing as it was built rather than go to council rent was produced by the left wing Dawn Cine Group in the early 1950s (Dawn DawnCine, 1952/56) ³⁶.

³⁶ Details of the protest and the political context of the events is in (Johnstone, 1992). Analysis of the short film is undertaken in the Directory of World Cinema: Scotland (Nowlan & Finch, 2015) p325

These are each particular dissonances in the local site. To explore any one of them is not to set it as representative of where we are but as resourcing possibilities of a remaking of here and of us, in some way. These are sites of gathering that have arisen through the research in particular, but in church terms a future step would lie in decision making processes for identifying specific *gathering sites*³⁷.

Returning to the overall shape of the project in relation to my own witnessing community, the *re-siting act* arose through the analysis work on the *gathering act*. Again, this process was embryonic through the project. Primary participation in this stage of the project, while the discourse around it was in development, lay in helping with the planned making. Some of the planned participatory work collectively in the material work of preparing for the performative event, in terms of the daffodil planting as an action of us together, couldn't take place because of weather issues. The planting had to be fitted in between heavy rain, snow & windy conditions, with few able to contend with the issues in timing and availability. This preparatory work towards a *re-siting*, through acts of making together, also carries potential for a shared physical making together by the co-witnesses of the church and those involved in the gathering site. Something of this took place in the run up to the installation and on the day jointly taking down the daffodils to the Holmlea School site, sharing alongside in the walking and the laying out.

³⁷ In the language of one of the leadership team in the church, such work can develop from just "hingin' about"!

The work of re-weaving is also a shared area of response. Within this project the engagement of the *re-weavers* was intended towards improvised reflection on the moment. The richness and enthusiasm that came through suggests that a wider work of improvised critical discipleship within a witnessing community, committed to reflecting on such immediate, local re-makings, may carry a significant fruitfulness in positive engagement. An 'alongside' path was opened up with one of the co-witnessing couples of the research also participating in the reflective work with those from within our setting.

These three areas where the project weaves into the material living of this witnessing community in Cathcart, have also helped to begin a process of reshaping who we are, with developing discussions around biblical themes and images of the garden, land and fruitfulness as bearing significance for our witnessing here in the south side of Glasgow, alongside early explorations underway of developing an urban orchard on the land of the church.

4.3

Freerunning movements in the academy

Here, I return to the resolution of the second problematic of the thesis, sketched out in 1.3; and then define the work of *re-siting* as a response to hegemonic concerns in poietic work raised in 1.4, under that resolution. I set *re-siting* as a critical distancing action of entangled reflexivity, an interruptive poietic tactic. These together define my making of a path in the discourse of practical theology.

4.3.1

Resolving the 2nd problematic

Within the sketched response of 1.3 to the second problematic, *the elision of poiesis in a practical theology discourse*, I began to express a commitment to a language of *textility* in keeping open the actions of making – ‘to make is to undertake poietic action that necessarily participates in that which is beyond us and is not contained by us’, where that which is beyond us, the materials to hand, can be understood in the language of *textile*. My additional threading of the conceptual tools of Tim Ingold through an entanglement in the intensive and interweaving relations of a Trinitarian God, is worked through the theological framework of Paul Fiddes. But the thesis itself has been concerned with a local *textility* of *here*.

This commitment to working with the *textility of here* in works of becoming and remaking of ourselves and our situatedness, which is developed through the thesis, is set against the hylomorphic model that reinforces the elision of poiesis within a practical theology discourse. The openings towards *poiesis* that are beginning to be teased out of the discourse through Heather Walton need to be pushed further through a commitment to such textility. My thesis, in undertaking a work of re-making through local textility, draws *poietic* action directly into critique of the existing discourse, alongside the work of Heather Walton and John Wall. This opening freerunning in the academy situates my research as that work of critique, within a wisdom trajectory of practical theology.

inking in the sketched response to the elision of poiesis in practical theology

David Ford coins a phrase ‘hot wisdom’. Against a perception that wisdom is practised in modes of cool, distant reflection, ‘hot wisdom’ flows out of the ‘intensities and urgencies’ discerned in the midst of cries (Ford, 2011, pp. 2,3). Ford situates his wisdom trajectory purposefully as a troubler of hegemonic discourse (Ford, 2011, p. 147). But he doesn’t go far enough.

Ford’s wisdom carries risk. It risks in the seeking and discerning of cries in the world ‘...set within the complex, many-stranded drama of God’s involvement with creation for its good.’ (Ford, 2011, p. 22). It risks in his declaration that ‘This manifesto takes particulars with

radical seriousness' (Ford, 2011, p. 10). Both of these commitments – the discerning of cries and the seriousness of particularities – prompt questions to hegemonic discourse, which seeks to silence cries and deny particularity. Ford signals a disruptive work towards theological hegemony within his 'hot wisdom' through the metaphor of 'narrative drama' over the alternative of 'epic' in depicting how we are to live in the world wisely³⁸ – '...hegemonic solutions [taken up in an epic mode] are not an appropriate goal' (Ford, 2011, p. 147). Instead we are participating in works of crafting, as *witnessing, poetic selves* (Ford, 2011, p. 187). But there is a tension in his work here on risk, and it comes in relation to a question which he sets as crucial in contemporary theology: *where and with whom do I belong?* Between his disruptive 'hot wisdom' and the way in which he answers that question within his manifesto there is a tension, and it is in this tension that his hot wisdom needs to be retained in the promise with which it is set out.

Ford's extended response to his question of belonging is centred on belonging to the worshipping community and the learning community. There is a further belonging signalled, but not developed, a friendship on the margins, as carrying some of the deepest explorations of wisdom. I choose also to commit to the question of belonging. But I am committing to the people *here*, a *blossoming of here*, through which belonging to Jesus and the people of God takes place - *I belong here, amongst this local, these particular people, here*. And there is a discernment of cries to be undertaken, here, in the midst of a commitment to particularity that risks in the making of a way of wisdom, and may heal something of the pathologies of

³⁸ Ford purposefully commits to the metaphor of drama to depict the practice of wisdom in the world as a creative participative work, an improvising work in the Spirit, over alternative narrative forms of epic or lyric where '(i)ts primary perspective is not the grand overview or the self's interiority, but the ongoing, open drama of people and events...' (Ford, 2011, p. 41).

Christian belonging which Ford expresses (Ford, 2011, p. 89). His 'hot wisdom' opens towards a disrupting path of wisdom in hegemonic discourse, undertaken through a discernment of cries and attentiveness to particularities. But the full import of that is not carried through within his work into material, local engaged sites of practice and a commitment to *local* belonging, because of his preceding commitments to the worshipping and learning communities of which he is a part. A different route is needed to fully pursue the tentative marginal directions of belonging. My thesis sets out such a different route towards the undertaking of 'local hot wisdom', a practiced and entangled work of the church, as a cherishing of *here* (A. McIntosh, 2004, p. 4).

As a wisdom trajectory this stands distinct from the path pursued most recently within a practical theology discourse through the published collective work of '*Christian Practical Wisdom: What it is and Why it Matters*' (Bass, Cahalan, Miller-McLemore, Nieman, & Scharen, 2016). Their stated purpose is the rebalancing of 'practical and theoretical wisdom' (Bass et al., 2016, p. 2). The issue here lies in the binary thinking and the obscuring of the possibilities present in *poietic/techne* works of crafting that seek material situated change through wise crafting work. This is epitomised in the statement within the opening framing piece:

'[Phronesis] also differs from a third kind of knowledge, *techne*, or craftsmanship, because 'action and production belong to different kinds'. More than either of these phronesis is adaptive and engaged.'

(Bass et al., 2016, p. 5)

No!

This position continues to commit to a hylomorphic understanding of making, simply as the producing of an idea into a form, rather than a work of *textility*, where wise material judging knows the material to hand and how to draw the beauty of it out – the wisdom in *poiesis* is ultimately directed towards a blossoming of more than ‘me’, and more than ‘us’. The implications of that early mis-direction, a repeating of the normative elision of *poiesis* now operating through this developing wisdom trajectory to practical theology, reverberates through the different sections of the collective book, which remain ultimately committed to a reshaping of the understandings and practices of the faith community, even if through experiences and situations which lie beyond the community, rather than crafting commitments to ‘local blossomings’.

This *poietic* critique of such a wisdom trajectory within practical theology has background in the writing of John Wall. In 1.3 I began sketching my response to the 2nd problematic through the polemical calls of Heather Walton. In her chapter on poetics within *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, she sets out three encounters of poetics and practical theology. First, *a poetics of the church*, exploring creative work in understanding the experience and nurturing of faith communities. Second, *a poetics of practice*, how creativity can play into what we do in a wider social context. And third, *a poetics of testimony*, exploring narrative constructions as challenges to social silences, and speaking with ‘the brokenness of poetic language’ rather than dominating discourses (Heather Walton, 2012, p. 180). This latter approach has made its mark in the narrative constructions of my research, but it is the second encounter, which I am taking forward into research on the ground - John Wall’s call of ‘Dare to create!’ (Wall, 2003, p. 338).

This concluding call in his 2003 essay linking *poetics* and *phronesis*, actions of making with practices of wisdom, is complex and nuanced in the context of his argument. Wall's essay is a significant preparatory essay in addressing, within a wisdom discourse, the elision of *poiesis* in practical theology. He writes of sketching a theory of 'poetic phronesis' (Wall, 2003, p. 334), situated makings attentive to particularity. Through my thesis I make the marks of that sketching in the ground where I serve. This is no longer sketching.

Wall carries a poetic anti-hegemonic commitment, through Paul Ricoeur, into a remaking of concrete social practices³⁹, a remaking of living *here* which works against totalizing narratives of the self in those re-creatings. There is a commitment to bringing the disruption of others in messy contradictions of our own narrative identities into our remaking practices of both the material site and our narratives of who we are, making '...new ways of living situatedly among others...in which others also participate' (Wall, 2003, p. 338). Acts of making, for Wall, underlie practices of wisdom, as necessary creative re-makings in the context of 'unique violence[s]' of concrete and situated living, which necessitate 'difficult and inconclusive' reflexivity, an *entangled* work of re-making in the becoming of this place and people.

³⁹ He explores with Ricoeur the acknowledgment of difference: '...a critically phronetic capacity must confront the concrete complexities of life in which the 'other' remains always to some extent an 'exception' to our own existing and inevitably too simple moral projects' (Wall, 2003, p. 325). Wall uses the Greek play *Antigone* as a critical distancing device through which identities are remade in the work of performance. My re-siting research work set out in *Crafting Interruptions* is a situated poetic work of critical distancing which explores re-narrations of ourselves and our context in the performative/reflexive work.

Wall marks the potentiality for hegemonic violence being undertaken through poetic practices, even as he draws a non-hegemonic line in his argument – a potential which I also raised within 1.4. In my research I have undertaken a methodologically valid practice within a wisdom discourse trajectory which disrupts hegemonic narratives, of ourselves and our site, in a poietic action. I argue that the work of re-siting as a poietic interruptive tactic gives direction and shape to this ‘difficult reflexivity’, one entangled in our own and in others making, within such disruption.

4.3.2

An interruptive poietic tactic

Here I define the **#imaginingcommonties** installation, as an anti-hegemonic tactic of local re-making, under a critical distancing action of entangled reflexivity. I set this out as a work of stretching the tactical work of de Certeau, and tagging it as ‘interruptive’.

the stretching of de Certeau

In *The Practice of Everyday Life (Vol. 1)* de Certeau reacts to the work of Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault explores the micro-mechanisms through which power and control are exercised across genealogical discourses of imprisoning in Europe, using these

extremities to set out approaches to the working of power on people through cultures. De Certeau positions his work as the provision of a language to enable discussion of the micro-mechanisms of resistance of those upon whom power is being enacted:

...to perceive and analyse the microbe-like operations proliferating [through] a multitude of “tactics” articulated in the details of everyday life...to bring to light the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical and makeshift creativity of groups or individuals caught in the nets of “discipline”

(de Certeau, 2011, p. xiv)

De Certeau begins with a language of ‘trajectories’ to describe the poetic makings of micro-resistances – ‘wandering lines’ forming ‘unforeseeable sentences, partly unreadable paths across a space’, which mark interests and desires which are more than the planned readings of the city. However, he very quickly moves to break down ‘trajectory’ to a language of ‘tactics’ set against ‘strategies’ of power (de Certeau, 2011, p. xviii). This reworking is intentionally to signal that these trajectories are about temporary practices that seek alterations in the situated moment. ‘Trajectory’, for de Certeau carries the potential to be understood as a line traced on a graph, a movement captured and contained. The explanation of ‘trajectory’ through the language of ‘tactics’ is intended to position these small acts of everyday resistance within trajectories of *becoming*, rather than simply of *being* – they are marks and traces of movements and relations which retain a forward movement (de Certeau, 2011, p. 35).

As such, the language of tactics has aligned with the *in-between* lines of Ingold which lie within my research. Ingold also draws links between the tactical work of de Certeau and participation in situated becoming through his meshwork ontology:

...the structures that confine, channel and contain are not immutable. They are ceaselessly eroded by the tactical manoeuvring of inhabitants whose 'wandering lines' (lignes d'erre) or 'efficacious meanderings' — in de Certeau's words (1984: xviii) — undercut the strategic designs of society's master-builders... Life will not be contained, but rather threads its way through the world along the myriad lines of its relations... [In] this meshwork of interwoven lines — there are no insides or outsides, only openings and ways through. An ecology of life, in short, must be one of threads and traces, not of nodes and connectors.

(Ingold, 2007, p. 102)

De Certeau refers to 'the long poem of walking...articulating a...poetic geography' (Certeau, 2011, pp. 100, 105). 'Tactics' is a language being set out by de Certeau to enable everyday practices, such as walking to be understood as a 'poiesis', a 'way of making' (Certeau, 2011, p. xv) which threads new lines of becoming through the strategic spaces of others, distinctions marked by the lack of power in tactical manoeuvring set against the implementation of power in strategic placing. Tactics are temporary, improvising bricolage juxta-positionings (Certeau, 2011, p. 37) opportunistically articulating a threading of life, a becoming.

I have set out de Certeau's tactics in order to stretch them through my work towards *interruptive* tactics as a particular distinctive in my argument in relation to hegemonic narratives in play. The tactics/strategy of de Certeau are explicitly set out as tentative ways to enable a discussion, to give a language to speak, ultimately about the events of 1968 in Paris, where *everything changed and nothing changed* (Buchanan, 2000, p. 2). It is a way of speaking, discussing, a tentative language to explore what took place in an event. It intends to provide a way to speak of what is taking place in the everyday constructing of living

(Buchanan, 2000, p. 49). My work stretches de Certeau through moving beyond descriptions of everyday resistances towards reiterations⁴⁰ of local tactics in performative works of remaking, as a poietic tactical crafting. The interruptive 'tag', aligns this work with the anti-hegemonic interruptive theologies of Johann Baptist Metz and Lieven Boeve as a work resourced in local textilities, attentive to difference and dissonance and particularities of *here*.

4.3.2.1

two decisions on crafting non-hegemonic interruption:

decision 1: what is gathered?

⁴⁰ A recently completed thesis at UWS Creative Media unit in Paisley, undertaken by Ben Parry on *Cultural Hijack*, carries similarities to my work in prompting moves towards the *stretching* of de Certeau. Working off small artistic gestures of giftings into the material discursive local space, Parry argues that seeking and disrupting hegemonic practice in the material urban space draws a focus on everyday practices as '...the critical place and space through which cracks are discovered, uncovered, opened up and into which we can prototype alternative urbanisms' (Parry, 2014, p. 102). Here he is opening up a potential 'remaking' creativity to everyday practices which stretches the 'tactical' language of Michel de Certeau in similar ways to my own research. There is a development within Parry's curating work in his thesis which opens up this stretching move from descriptive tactic towards a tactics of re-making. In a final project in Parry's thesis he is invited to explore 'cultural hijack' practices through an urban residency programme based in Dharavi, an informal settlement within the Indian city of Mumbai, which lay as the backdrop to Danny Boyle's film *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008). The focus of this project lay with the destruction and displacement of communities within Dharavi for pipeline construction. This is an ongoing project, but towards the end of the thesis Parry points to the impact of seeking to undertake a remaking project while entangled in the everyday lives of those he is with during the course of the project. Distinct from the earlier artist/researcher based work, he draws out two consequences to his local entanglement in the material-social site of Dharavi. First, that the source of a tactics of remaking, as an act of local change, lies with re-iterations of everyday embodied local practices, 'concatenations of small acts of resistance' (Parry, 2014, p. 238) that intend the interruption of wider social discourses of this place (Parry, 2014, p. 214); second, that interventions in the local, towards new becomings, require reflexivity upon the action, *because* the work is entangled with others - 'The story of the project is a resistance to my own complexity and compliance in a system that adheres to the normative structures of power rather than challenging them in furthering an alternative discourse of the city' (Parry, 2014, p. 225). For Parry, these consequences in the research point towards '...a different form of interventionist practice' (Parry, 2014). My research is also seeking this different form.

Metz's articulation of a public theology which can take place after such destructive works as the holocaust, or in the wake of our own 21st century human tragedies, bears into Ford's trajectory of wisdom – 'The shortest definition of theology: interruption' (Metz, 2011, p. 158), where the starting point of interruption is suffering, engaged through memory, narrative and solidarity. Interruptive theology through such approaches underpins the discerning of cries in the world as an ecclesial act, within Ford's 'hot wisdom', and supports the performative ethnographic practices of the thesis. As 'weak and fragile' (Boeve, 2014, p. 126) concepts they interrupt contexts of forgetfulness.

The work of the thesis attends to everyday tactics as routes towards such interruption. This is localised, particular work. But it speaks not simply from the interruptive of Metz. Lieven Boeve defines the key issue for Metz: the forgetting of foreign suffering (Boeve, 2014, p. 128). As such, the developing of interruptions is an action continually against hegemonic narratives which drive this forgetting. The critique that Boeve lays against Metz is in not continuing the force of his theological interruptive into contexts of difference, where tensions lie between both speaking and being aware of the denial of other voices in our speaking. The 'forgetting of foreign suffering' occurs within that denial, but the context is more expansive than that envisaged by Metz. Boeve turns towards Jean-Francois Lyotard to argue for a continual making of an open narrative as a theological work, which takes place under the force of the question: *who is not allowed to speak?* (Boeve, 2014, p. 130). My thesis takes this commitment to an open narrative into practice as an ecclesial local work, carrying a willingness to be interrupted in our witness through attending and listening to local dissonances which can work against any '...facile closure of one's own hegemonic narrative

(Boeve, 2014, p. 132), acknowledging the making of decisions about who speaks and who isn't being heard, in the ongoing and unresolved constructing of our situating witness here, through the acts of gathering.

The gathering work is intentionally amongst local everyday tactics in situations beyond my witnessing community, the discerning of what and who is not being heard in the current constructions of *here*.

There were limitations within the project shaped through issues of time, of trust and of language – those have been explored earlier. But this work is never *representative* but *particular*. If I make a path in the grass here, it is specifically here, amongst these blades of grass – we make particular paths through our walking. But in gathering in this way, the project has been created through dissonant, non-hegemonic narratives – those can work tactically, in non-hegemonic patterns, to interrupt both the local site and ourselves as the body of Christ under an open narrative commitment.

decision 2: where is there tactical potential in re-siting?

“...just as islands cannot encompass the sea but the sea can indeed be named in reference to the islands that lie therein. Islands and sea farers bear witness to the sea, yet they are not the sea and do not master it”

(Boeve, 2014, p. 93)

The second decision lies in tactical situating as a non-hegemonic practice. This works in two ways. First as a tactical performance in the local site. Ian Buchanan who has written a seminal work on de Certeau's reception into the English speaking world defines a tactical situating as 'positioning a flux in which things can change' (Buchanan, 2000, p. 19). Within the **#imaginingcommonties** project the decisions around the siting of the work lie within the research work of gathering and have been set out under the 'places of the soil'/'soiled places' tension within the local site.

But there is a second way in which the performative work of the installation prompts the 'open narrative' work of Boeve as an interruptive in hegemonic narrative. Within 1.4, *Entangled Reflexivity*, I made reference to Norman Denzin's performative assessment of the reflexivity invoked through the film work of the Vietnamese director Trinh T. Minh-ha. As the filming of (constructed) narratives of Vietnamese women becomes a performative event, setting a critical distance between the research and the performance, it becomes a site for 'multiple experiences' which re-narrate the identities of those involved and those who are participating in the filmic event.

This multiplicity of voicing through offering reflective work was structured into the **#imaginingcommonties** project, through the inscribing devices of the postcards and the work of the re-weavers. Buchanan's work on de Certeau, seeking to understand him as a Jesuit priest while yet working against utopian totalising narratives, suggests that de Certeau resolves that potential theological disparity through positioning the resistances of everyday

life in naming and telling stories here as a resistance of God, naming utopias as ‘false Gods’⁴¹ (Buchanan, 2000, p. 30). A reflexive narrating here in this tactical re-siting, does not work towards new closures, but a tactical keeping open of this place and our place in it, and others’ places in it through naming and narrating, where we ‘bear witness to the sea, yet do not master it’.

This work of local reflexivity and reweaving holds further potential than could be undertaken within the limits of the project, but these actions occur within the project as provoking new lines of flight out of the installation, addressing who we are and how we make our lives here. In her exploration of the tensions of undertaking public theology, Elaine Graham calls for ‘...new narratives and resources of hope and obligation (needing) to be engendered’ (E. Graham, 2013, p. 157). I am proposing interruptive tactics undertaken through non-hegemonic practices of *poietic hermeneutics* as such engendering of new narratives within local settings.

I have set out through the thesis an argument for an ecclesial practice that creatively lives *here*. This is an interruptive tactical work of *poiesis* – both ourselves as a witnessing community and this place and people to whom we belong here, have been interrupted. This practice of ‘hot wisdom’ is not aimed at resolution but creative and continuing participation in local becoming, contesting and reworking ‘what matters and what is excluded from mattering’ (Barad) *here*.

⁴¹ This reverberates with the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer - “Those who love their dream of a Christian community more than they love the Christian community itself become destroyers of that Christian community even though their personal intentions may be ever so honest, earnest and sacrificial.” (Bonhoeffer, Kelly, Bloesch, & Burtneiss, 1996, p. 36)



Figure 4.1

Playground, #imaginingcommonties project 2015. Photo by participant, used with permissions.

MAKING A PATH IN THE PLAYGROUND:

OR what the project does

My thesis offers a practice to the local church of gathering and re-siting, a bricolage work of interruptive re-making, which I am naming *poietic hermeneutics*.

The thesis locates validating methodological support to this practice in performative ethnography and argues for the practice theologically within a critical trajectory of wisdom under a Trinitarian participatory model. This trajectory is developed in critical alignment with a *textile* approach to the act of making, shaped in three conceptual tools in the work of the anthropologist Tim Ingold.

In the course of this validating work of the practice I critique an elision of *poietics* in a practical theology discourse and I set out *poietic hermeneutics* as a development of the initial polemic of Heather Walton within the field.

The practice, as it is undertaken within the course of the thesis, offers up material and discursive resources through the local site which can interrupt the taking place of *here* and our proximal entanglement as a witnessing community in this ongoing making. These are creative liberative actions prompting future development.

Significant directions for that future development come out of the commitment to *poiesis* within a condition of textility. A primary work lies in disputing the primacy of praxis in practical theology under this condition. The pastoral cycle, I contend, is no longer circular but the work of the cycle, under poiesis, takes place through a series of whorls arising in the

course of making what can be termed local ‘icons of immanence’⁴². *Poiesis*, here, is a prompter of praxis⁴³. Through the making of local ‘icons of immanence’, traces of the ‘visceral body of Christ’⁴⁴ are brought into performative engagement with the ‘gathered body of Christ’, reshaping praxes through interrupted and newly becoming material-social spaces which are more than the church. The public legitimacy of ecclesial speaking into the public sphere here lies in the grounded and negotiated tracing of the ‘visceral body of Christ’ through the making of ‘icons of local immanence’.

My research agenda now moves, then, towards the making of local ‘icons of immanence’ through gathering and re-siting, using the apparatus of interruptive *poietic hermeneutics*, under a condition of textility. Taking this forward as an ecclesial practice, I intend

- to explore differing actions of gathering and re-siting, suited to specific contexts;
- to explore the capacity of the local church to undertake reflexive work on the ‘visceral body of Christ’ in relation to the ‘gathered body of Christ’ through the making of such local ‘icons of immanence’ in interruptive poietic practices
- to develop lines beyond the event-based work of re-siting – how do we continue to re-weave new local textures from the interruptive events?

⁴² This phrasing is very helpfully developed by Daniel Colucciello Barber in undertaking a disentanglement of Deleuzian creative dissonance from simply secular positioning and drawing it into conversation with John Howard Yoder’s political activism as a theologian of immanence (Barber, 2015).

⁴³ In this move, my work aligns with arts-based research initiatives making similar explorations of textile approaches in works of making, and the impact of Deleuze and Guattari. Jagodzinski and Wallin declare that ‘Art must not simply remap *our* lives differently, but more profoundly, must become capable of re-mapping life in a manner capable of intensifying what it might mean to think and act.’ (Jagodzinski & Wallin, 2013, p. 108)

⁴⁴ I am returning here to the earlier language of my research portfolio, to convey the embodied commitment to the engagement.

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